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Manning
Mr. England, life
story of Winston
Churchill

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Mr. England

The Life Story of Winston Churchill

The Fighting Briton

by

Paul Manning and Milton Bronner

THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY
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PROLOG

In times of great national stress and storm, it often seems to religious men and women as if Divine Providence in its infinite wisdom and mercy had raised up a leader to face the crisis, to bring good cheer and courage to failing hearts, and to speed them on to final victory.

In the United States, we think of Washington, reared on a Virginia plantation, and Lincoln, born in a humble Kentucky log cabin, as such God-given leaders of the American people.

Today there are many lovers of freedom all over the world who in these anxious times look upon Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain, as another leader marked by destiny for immortality. He who fought as a youth in Britain's battles and in after years helped govern his country stands today in the hopes and prayers of free men as the embodiment of all that is best and finest in the long history of his island home. His words and actions spur his countrymen on to deeds of endurance and of valor that are the admiration of the civilized world.

Here, then, let the curtain rise on a simple tale of how he came to be where he is and what he is.

Part ONE • MR. ENGLAND

Chapter One

PICTURE OF THE MAN

There they were, Winston Churchill, Harry Hopkins and Lord Halifax. Three men in a mine sweeper — with Harry Hopkins getting sicker every minute and Halifax not feeling so well himself.

But up on deck Winston Churchill, as usual, was doing all right. First he'd walk up to the prow and check the drift, then he'd walk back to the stern and peer into the mist at the other boat carrying Mrs. Churchill and Lady Halifax. And, to the despair of Harry Hopkins, every time Churchill would pass the cabin he'd shout without shifting the Havana cigar from his mouth:

"Hopkins, come up on deck and see how these paravanes work."

Then, laughing uproariously as Hopkins would weakly decline, he'd go back and take another squint at the boat behind.

It was like that all the way to the *George V*, anchored some miles up the coast from the rain-

swept dock where the good-will party had boarded the mine sweeper for the big battleship which was to carry Lord and Lady Halifax to America.

The climax to this Odyssey came, however, when they boarded the 35,000-ton ship. A narrow ladder, dangling well above the water level, made it necessary to jump from the cabin top of the ice-covered mine sweeper onto the ladder at the moment when the boat was on the upbeat of a swell.

Churchill made it all right. Despite his short legs and sixty-six years, the jump was made to order for him. But Halifax and the others nearly hit the water and when it came to Harry Hopkins, the little mine sweeper banged against the side and smashed the lower rungs.

But with Churchill leaning over the side and shouting encouragement, Hopkins jumped and made it. Scrambling up the ladder and probably wondering why he ever left peaceful Washington, he was greeted not with a compliment for the excellent jump, but with the highly impersonal and extraneous observation:

"Hopkins, I think these admirals are all wrong about this armor plate. It could have been a quarter-inch thicker with no trouble at all."

With that he set off to find an admiral.

That's the way with Winston Churchill. Sixteen hours a day he's out in front.

His exhaustive schedule begins in the misty early morning, when a car sweeps up to No. 10 Downing Street. Out of this car steps the Prime Minister. Wearing a black Homburg hat, a heavy black overcoat, a conservative dark suit with striped trousers and carrying a gold-headed cane, he walks quickly up the two short steps and disappears through the entrance way.

Inside, he goes at once to a ground-floor bedroom where he undresses, gets into a pair of striped pajamas and hops once again into bed. It's the extreme vulnerability of No. 10 Downing Street to bombs that prevents Churchill from sleeping every night in this traditional home of all prime ministers.

When he does sleep occasionally at another address which is secret, he hurries back as early as possible to this Downing Street bedroom in which he feels he can really relax. The bedroom is roomy, and from the large mahogany bed facing the window, Churchill commands a view of the small grass plot at the rear of No. 10.

To the housekeeper this room is too plain. It's not good enough for the Prime Minister, she says;

so, to keep her from despair, Churchill reluctantly says nothing about the bright red curtains she has hung from gleaming brass rods, but he does remain adamant on the point of not having anything on the floor but one inexpensive mouse-colored Wilton carpet.

First on his list is reading—official papers, general mail, reports from the Near East, the Balkans, the high seas. At eight-thirty he rings for his breakfast. Like all his meals, there's nothing fancy about it. Bacon and eggs, sometimes with a little kidney. And always coffee. He doesn't drink tea—at any meal.

A secretary moves in about then. He has six, plus a confidential parliamentary private secretary, the Right Hon. Brendan Bracken. With one of the six taking dictation on a noiseless portable typewriter, he begins replying. Sometimes, however, it's a key speech for Parliament or the first draft of a radio talk.

Until Churchill became prime minister, most of his books were written in this fashion. First a rough draft in bed, then the finished product in his office or country home study with plenty of reference notes spread out over his desk. His six-volume life of Marlborough—an ancestor—was

written that way, as were most of the twenty-two volumes he has written.

At 10 A. M., which leaves him thirty minutes before his cabinet meets, he dismisses his secretary. Springing out of bed, he shaves, using a safety razor. He is too old-fashioned for an electric razor, he says. He takes baths because showers have not yet been introduced at Downing Street. Then he's off to the large, log-heated conference room in the adjoining wing.

He moves swiftly to his chair at the long cabinet table. Each minister reports in turn, then answers Churchill's many questions. After which follows a round table discussion of domestic and foreign policy, and then the conference breaks up. This is around noon, and the next hour until lunch time is spent with key men of the Admiralty and War Office, who have stepped across to No. 10.

Lunch at one o'clock is a simple meal. First an aperitif with ice, then cold roast beef as the main dish, finished off with black coffee, brandy and a cigar. Cigars are his one real luxury. They're all very expensive and outsize. When asked by an inquisitive visitor how many he smoked a day, he replied: "Fourteen, and I like every one of them."

An hour nap follows lunch and then he's off to address Parliament, receive more people, maybe visit Buckingham Palace or inspect a military unit.

At five he's back in Downing Street dictating to another secretary. Striding up and down his office, the words at times flow smoothly, at other times not so smoothly. When his sentences lose their precision, he'll stride over to the serving tray, pour a small glass of vermouth, light a cigar and begin once again.

One hour of this high-pressure dictation and he moves from the room, going downstairs for a short thirty-minute sleep. Then, to Churchill, comes the high point of the day: evening dinner presided over by Mrs. Churchill, with up to a dozen famous people as guests. Generals, admirals, politicians—they can all be found any night at the Churchill dinner table.

It's when dinner is over that the real conference of the day begins. Churchill and his key dinner guests sit around in an atmosphere of heavy cigar smoke and beat and mould Britain's policy into a malleable form.

Winston Churchill is as familiar and easygoing as an old side-button shoe.

He is a Tory, an imperialist, a member of the old school tie group, a descendant of the first Duke of Marlborough . . . yet he is an earthy man of the people such as perhaps no other prime minister has been.

He is "Mr. England."

He is, by some curious human alchemy, just what every British working man and shopkeeper would like to be . . . and he has lived the full life every little man in England would like to live.

The ordinary man in the street has probably imagined himself, as Churchill now is, in the driver's seat of this colossal three-ring show. He has probably dreamed of giving orders to generals and admirals and of being constantly surrounded by famous figures. Knowing that nothing like it would ever happen to him, the ordinary man can still remain happy and chuckle when a newsreel flashes a picture on the screen of "Winnie" running up a gangplank, as his party of younger men pant breathlessly behind—or laugh, when he hears of some new jest which the Prime Minister has just used to ginger up some too-slow member of Whitehall.

To this ordinary man and millions like him, old-time politician Churchill is a beloved character

actor who finally, and deservedly, has been given the star role in a great drama.

The ordinary man delights in knowing the revealing "little things" about Churchill....

That the Prime Minister likes good but not fancy food.

That he likes good drinks and fine cigars.

That during a dinner hour he likes beautiful and witty women—he says they put bubble in the party—and that at such times his pet peeve is the bore.

That at all times his big hate is to have somebody whistling, whether on or off key.

But best of all, the man in the street and his wife, being what they are—a thoroughly domesticated, home-loving couple—enjoy and appreciate Churchill's utter dependency upon Mrs. Churchill in personal matters. It proves to them that while Winston is the most sparkling bon vivant ever to sit in the prime minister's chair, he is still an essentially simple and uncomplicated person. In personal matters, for example, like clothing. Churchill has a remarkably small amount of clothing for a prime minister. Yet the fact he always looks well dressed is due to Mrs. Churchill. Not only does she preside over the Churchill dinner table, but she takes charge of her husband's appearance. Victory is

hers, she says, when after a long campaign Winston consents to go with her to the family tailor in Saville Row for a new suit.

All England takes new confidence in the spectacle of Churchill hustling as he goes about his monumental tasks. Everyone Churchill meets, in fact, becomes impregnated with the same hustle. This is probably the reason why he carries a cane with a gold knob and band embossed with the arms of the Spencer-Churchills—not to support his sixty-six-year-old body, but to prod anyone who doesn't hustle.

Whether he is in Downing Street or on an inspection tour, Churchill is persistent and aggressive. They say the way he got the unwilling Lord Beaverbrook into his cabinet was to call him up every two hours for thirty-six hours until the *London Daily Express* tycoon gave in.

The Scotland Yard man who has been with Churchill nearly twenty years says that when the Prime Minister goes to Dover or to some other area to inspect defenses, he misses nothing. Like some hawk-eyed American chain-store supervisor followed by an uneasy store manager, Churchill always spots what a Commanding Officer might prefer to have overlooked until the next visit.

At Downing Street, there is no such thing as a highly routined day for Winston Churchill. Neville Chamberlain, for example, was entirely run by his secretariat. They put a timetable on his desk in the morning and he kept faithfully to it, minute by minute, throughout the day. Eleven minutes for an interview, nine minutes at the Admiralty, six minutes to dictate a reply to some minister.

But not Churchill. He would just as soon cancel a cabinet meeting as bat an eye. And the morning after any great blitz, he and his much publicized chimney-pot hat are seen moving through the area and keeping a lot of people waiting in Downing Street.

In the House of Commons, Winston Churchill is usually at his best. He is the ablest orator in Parliament, even if he does commit his speeches to heart and practice them before a mirror. He is sharpest in unrehearsed debate—a master of the barbed phrase and the pungent retort.

This came to him naturally from his youngest days. In school, one of his teachers angrily threw some papers on the floor, raging:

"What can one do with boys who know absolutely nothing?"

Up piped Winston's treble: "Teach us, sir."

Acme

In his father's footsteps! Randolph Churchill leaves 10 Downing Street with Prime Minister and Mrs. Churchill to be presented to the House of Commons by his father.

It was the same dashing impudence that led him to say of Ramsay MacDonald, when MacDonald was premier: "He has the gift of compressing the largest amount of words into the smallest amount of thought."

When Stanley Baldwin was premier, Churchill said that he "had the habit of occasionally stumbling over the truth and then picking himself up and going on again as if nothing had happened."

He called Prime Minister Chamberlain "the undertaker from Birmingham."

Yet it is as a serious speaker, particularly when the country is on edge, that Winston Churchill excels.

The effect is always dramatic. He steps to the rostrum, slowly glances at his notes with the grim look of a Disraeli or Gladstone, and then goes into action. He starts slowly, and because of this slowness his lisp and inability to pronounce the letter *s* easily become apparent.

But as he warms to the job, occasionally hesitating as if searching for the right word, his speech moves with greater speed. At the high point he is delighting everyone with his not subtle but very biting humor and his grand refusal to pronounce foreign words and names in anything but ordinary

English. Like "Naazi" for "Nazi" with the accent on the *z* to make it sound like "nasty."

It is illustrative of the nature of the man that while his greatest speeches are genuine clarion calls to his brave compatriots, he has also an eye on posterity and the great niche he will occupy in history. It was in June, 1940, shortly after he had fulfilled his lifelong ambition of becoming England's prime minister, that he said:

"Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for one thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.' "

Wearing an old suit of overalls fastened up the front by a zipper and carrying a spade in one hand, Winston Churchill dictated to a secretary in the garden of his Westerham, Kent, country home.

He said that if he had a second chance in life, he might have done a lot of things differently.

For example, he might have placed his money on black instead of red during his visits many years ago to Monte Carlo. Then if the ivory ball had dropped into the black slot—as it so often did when he was playing red—he might have made a lot of money.

Main

Then if he had invested this money twenty years ago in plots of land on the lake shore at Chicago and had never gone to Monte Carlo any more, he might be a millionaire today.

Of course, he said, he might have become so fired by his good luck that he might have become an habitué of the tables, one of those melancholy shadows you always saw creeping around the gaming rooms of Monte Carlo in the old days

So maybe after all it's just as well you only have one chance in life. "I know," said Churchill, "when I survey the scene of my past life as a whole, I have no doubt that I do not wish to live it over again. The journey has been enjoyable and well worth taking—once." With that he turned and began spading around a pet rose bush.

The scene just described occurred shortly before the present war, and before Winston Churchill could have known that the most vital chapter of his life story still was to be written—in the prime minister's office at No. 10 Downing Street.

When, for years after 1930, the services of Winston Churchill were not requested by prime ministers, he used his enforced political leisure writing books, articles, putting up small brick walls and buildings, painting landscapes under

the name of Charles Marin. It was during these settled, easy years that he was able to produce enough literary work and fulfill sufficient lecture engagements to make $100,000 a year.

Today there is little time for such profitable leisure, but Winston Churchill doesn't mind. He's delighted with the fact that he has lost some weight since assuming the premiership. His job, despite its exhaustive schedule and grave responsibilities, is so interesting to him that he feels no sense of personal sacrifice.

Naturally the Prime Minister's family life has suffered somewhat. No longer are there the famous country dinner-table gatherings of family and guests, where it was the Churchill standing rule that if you had anything to say it must be tossed into the center of the table for everyone to pounce on.

Churchill always enjoyed this general conversation game, but not so the feminine part of his family. When Churchill got this game rolling, Mrs. Churchill would begin nervously rearranging and polishing silver around her plate. Daughters Sarah and Diana just sat quietly. Occasionally, though, when Sarah would get up nerve enough to brave the cynosure of eyes which immediately followed

every statement, her contribution would usually be given in a low, hesitant tone. And her father always made it worse, she says, by demanding in a loud, stentorian voice: "Speak up, child! Repeat the gem so we can receive full benefit."

All this has largely gone by the boards now, though. Sarah is married to actor Vic Oliver, who is doing war entertainment. Diana, also married, is doing war work. And Randolph is in the army, while eighteen-year-old Mary recently made her first speech to help raise money for British relief.

Which means that the running of the Churchill household is no longer the great problem of past years to Mrs. Churchill. But Mrs. Churchill, like so many millions of other mothers, has resigned herself to the fact that the children have grown up. So today all the energy and devotion which she possesses is lavished exclusively on Winston, except when the children rush down to the country for a quick visit.

Though Churchill no longer plays polo, which he likes immensely, or piquet or backgammon, which he does indifferently, he still takes a keen pride in his large collection of swans and ducks. He now has many rare breeds in his little lake at Westerham and enjoys watching them al-

most as much as he likes playing with his two cats —the one at Westerham and the black kitten recently adopted that he has to keep as a permanent resident at No. 10 Downing because Old Tom at Westerham wants no part of the new feline.

In the country, Churchill's real work is done in his study. It's a long, narrow room. Down one side is a mammoth table holding books, notes, newspapers. On the floor are two valuable rugs. The rugs cause Mrs. Churchill considerable embarrassment, because right down the center from one end of the room to the other runs the clear, beaten track of Winston's feet.

"But it's no use getting new rugs," says Mrs. Churchill. "If we do, he'll quickly wear them out too."

The only thing that seems never to wear out is Winston Churchill himself.

Part Two • MR. ENGLAND'S FIRST PERIOD

Chapter Two

THE EARLY YEARS

When Winston Spencer Leonard Churchill came to the United States some forty years ago on a lecture tour—during which he retold the famous tale of his miraculous and thrilling escape from a Boer prison in Pretoria—Mark Twain introduced him to a New York audience in these words:

"Ladies and gentlemen: The lecturer tonight is Winston Churchill. By his father he is an Englishman. By his mother he is an American. Behold the perfect man!"

That double national strain helps to explain much about the subject of this biography, but the roots of the matter go back much further in time, beyond his parents, his grandparents, or even his great-grandparents, for as long ago as the conflict between Roundhead and Cavalier in the middle of the seventeenth century there was a Winston Churchill on the English scene. Indeed, the Churchill family is easily traced back to the time of William, nicknamed the Conqueror.

But just as important as the family tree of a man or woman are the early formative years and the impressions they and the environment make on a child's mind.

In this case, the child being Winston Churchill, he would naturally be told much about his ancestors. He would learn about the Churchills who preceded the greatest of their line. But special stress would be laid precisely on that great man—John Churchill, born in the year 1650 in the small manor house of Ash in Devonshire, son of that earlier Winston Churchill, and later to be known as the Duke of Marlborough, England's greatest soldier.

On the surface the story of John Churchill takes on a fairy-tale quality; it is the story of a man upon whom fortune, most of the time, turned her most favorable smiles. In his early youth John and his sister Arabella had the luck to enter the circles of royalty at a time when royal favor was the stepping stone to good fortune. John became at the age of fifteen page of honor to the Duke of York, while Arabella became maid of honor to the Duchess. Like his father, John was interested in soldiering, and through the influence of his patron he was given a commission at the age of seventeen

in the King's regiment of Foot Guards, now known as the Grenadier Guards, then as now a crack regiment of the British Army. In 1672, when England sent six thousand troops to France in the war against Holland, Churchill was sent along, and he soon became a captain in the Duke of York's own regiment. Churchill knew that he could only obtain distinction and advancement through hard work and daring, and throughout the campaign he was in the fore of every engagement. His reckless daring won the attention of the great French marshal, Turenne, and on a bet made by Turenne, Churchill recaptured a position lost by a French colonel with only half the number of men. At the siege of Maestricht the Duke of Monmouth, Churchill, and a dozen others held off a considerable force of Dutch and recaptured a position the Dutch had taken. Later the Duke of Monmouth gave Churchill credit for the exploit and acknowledged that Churchill had saved his life.

In 1678 John Churchill performed one of the luckiest feats in his whole career; he won the heart of Sarah Jennings and married her. Lucky, for Sarah was the favorite attendant of the Princess Anne, daughter of the Duke of York, and destined to shine in history as Queen Anne. For many

years while she was Queen, Anne was only putty in the hands of the astute Sarah, with the result that John Churchill always received ample reward for his various services to the state. More than that, John and Sarah were for many years the most powerful couple in court circles.

When James II, the former Duke of York, came to the throne, the Churchills were in direct line for advancement. Three years before Colonel Churchill had been created a Scottish peer, and now he became an English baron. When Monmouth put in his ill-fated bid for the English crown, Churchill was made commander of the king's forces—till James remembered he owed a debt of gratitude to Feversham, a relation of Turenne's, and Churchill took second place. He swallowed his pride and did his best to offset the blunders of Feversham, and at the battle of Sedgmoor, where Monmouth was decisively defeated, Churchill led regiments into vigorous action while Feversham was getting dressed and shaved.

Although James placed implicit confidence in his general, Churchill was greatly opposed to James' attempt to make England a Catholic nation, and he was one of the first to write to William of Orange pledging his support should William de-

cide to come over to England. Nevertheless, James put him in command of the troops opposing William when the latter landed in 1688. James was surprised, and greatly chagrined, when his best general went over to the enemy's camp.

For his part in the bloodless revolution, William made Churchill Earl of Marlborough. Not altogether trusting his new earl, however, William sent him as far from home as he could—to the Netherlands in 1689 and to Ireland the following year, where Marlborough proved himself by capturing Cork and Kinsale.

In 1692 Marlborough's fortunes took a turn for the worse. Accused of treason, he was thrown in the Tower. Later, there being no proof of his guilt, he was released. It was quite true, however, that Marlborough was in touch with the exiled James, as were most of William's ministers. He wanted to make perfectly sure that the pig-headed Dutchman was going to be no worse than the Stuarts. In those days of vacillating and despotic rulers, when even the monarchs themselves were on the payroll of foreign countries, it paid to heed where the ax might fall. At any rate, there is no doubt that Marlborough valued his country's honor higher than a ruler's loyalty.

Gradually William lost his distrust of Marlborough and gradually he was given more responsible positions. He was not to reach the height of favor, though, until Anne came to the throne in 1702. Then it was that Sarah's patient tutoring and flattery bore fruit. In short order Marlborough was named commander-in-chief of the English forces at home and abroad and made a Knight of the Garter.

In the same year war was declared on France by England, Holland and Austria, and thus began the bloody, and sometimes futile, War of the Spanish Succession. Through the influence of Anne, Marlborough was given chief command of the allied forces; but, as is usual with allies, Marlborough spent more time fighting jealousy and conflicting aims than he did the enemy. Like all great generals, he wanted to get at the seat of the trouble—and this meant invading France. But the Dutch were fearful that their frontiers would be left undefended and the Austrians were more worried about putting an Austrian on the Spanish throne than defeating the French. Despite jealousy and opposition Marlborough gained several brilliant victories by capturing the fortresses of Kaiserwerth, Venlo, and Liége, and on his return to

England the grateful Anne made him duke and granted him £5000 a year as long as she should live.

The campaigns of the following year were not so successful for the Allies, which was largely due to the obstinacy and incapacity of the Dutch, and Marlborough had only minor successes to offset a rousing defeat inflicted on the Dutch.

Bolstered up by his imagined strength, Louis XIV became ambitious and decided to capture Vienna. Marlborough was equally determined to give the French a sound drubbing to make up for his lack of success the preceding year. French troops were sent into Bavaria to make a junction with Bavarian troops and march up the Danube to Vienna. Gifted with that ability of a great general to fathom his enemy's intentions, Marlborough guessed Louis' destination, and pretending to attack the northeastern frontier of France he moved into Bavaria. The French and Bavarians, taken by surprise near the village of Blenheim, were drawn up in two separate, extended armies. Nevertheless their position was very strong, with the Danube on their right flank and the river Nebel in front. At noon on August 13, 1704, after waiting for the Prince Eugene to join his forces, Marlbor-

ough attacked. At first the fighting looked as though it was going in favor of the French, who were somewhat stronger. The British brigade in their first attack on the village of Blenheim lost a third of their men. Further attacks had no more success and the losses were heavier. Marlborough did not want a soldier's battle, so, ordering Lord Cutts to hold the village of Blenheim and Eugene to hold the right, Marlborough attacked in the center, succeeding in repulsing the French and crossing the river. The battle was soon over. Leading the cavalry in the center, Marlborough pierced the French line and rolled up the enemy on both sides. The French lost heavily in killed and wounded, some being drowned in the Danube. Eleven thousand men, one hundred guns and two hundred colors were captured. This battle, Marlborough's greatest, marked the decline in the power of French arms, which hitherto had been supreme on the continent.

In England Marlborough's name was a synonym for glory. By an act of parliament he was given the manorial estate of Woodstock, formerly crown property, Anne built him a palace on the estate, and £240,000 of public money was spent on the buildings alone. The estate was renamed Blenheim

in honor of Marlborough's victory. Nothing was too good for England's hero.

The Duke went on to win the battles of Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet, and he was actively engaged upon the Continent until several unexpected circumstances brought about his downfall. For one thing he became mixed up in politics, and while he was fighting on the Continent his position was undermined at home by hostile political factions. But worst of all, Queen Anne started listening to other counsel than her beloved Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and Sarah, who had as bitter a temper as she had a clever brain, became too loudspoken in her espousal of the Whig cause. The result was that the Duchess was dismissed from her offices in 1710, and the following year Marlborough himself fell out of favor. He left England and remained on the Continent until the death of Anne in 1714, when he returned and resumed all his former military jobs. He had learned his lesson, and from this time till his death in 1722 the great general did not meddle in politics.

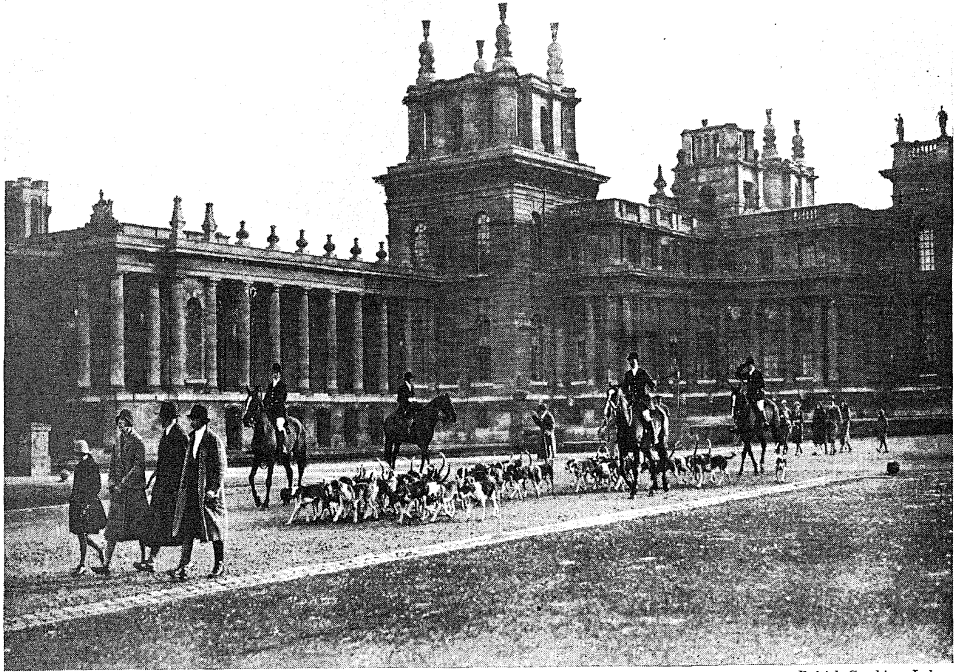
This great story was told to the young Winston Churchill with all of its most glorious sides turned outward. England has a superfluity of naval heroes, but their great military men are few and

far between, and it was a source of satisfaction to the young Winston to claim the greatest as his ancestor. Little was said, probably, of the aspersions cast upon the great Duke's character by smaller, carping critics—his meddling in politics, his flirting with two royal masters at the coming of William and Mary, his inordinate love for money, the attribution of his success in war to good fortune. Many years later the boy was to write a monumental biography of the Duke which would serve to vindicate him in the face of the bitter things said by his enemies.

It is also quite certain that the young boy was not told the famous poem by Robert Southey on the battle of Blenheim:

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory."

The poem stresses the futility of war. And the boy was destined to take part in almost every war his country waged during his grown life.



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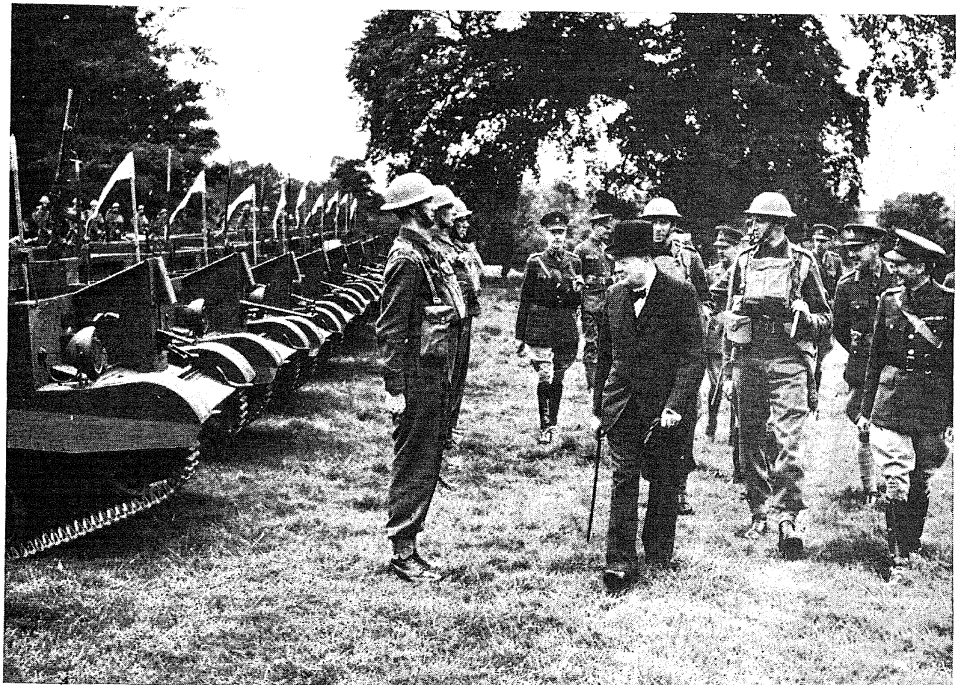
Blenheim Palace, the nation's gift to the Duke of Marlborough, where Churchill spent a large part of his boyhood



Wide World

Inspecting the Bren Gun carrier platoon of the Grenadier Guards, the regiment in which Churchill's famous ancestor, Marlborough, first served

There is a popular French song about Marlborough that Napoleon used to sing before every battle. Some say the song refers to the great Duke, others to a later Marlborough who led an unsuccessful expedition against St. Malo in Brittany; but the song is probably older than either of these gentlemen. It goes—

"Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine;
Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre
Nul sait quand reviendra . . . ."

All of which means that Marlborough—the French could not pronounce this hard English name the same way—is off to the wars and no one knows when he will return. Some have fancied that this song may have influenced the young Churchill to learn French. Certainly it is the only foreign language he ever really tried to learn.

Coming down to later times, the seventh Duke of Marlborough married the daughter of the third Marquess of Londonderry, thus continuing a process that had started long ago—that of intermarriage of the house of Churchill with many of the other old aristocratic families.

To this seventh Duke and Duchess was born in 1849 Randolph Churchill, father of the present Winston. Lord Randolph Churchill had a short and brilliant career in politics. He entered the House of Commons in 1874 from the constituency of Woodstock, the family seat. A member of the Conservative party, he was no more a slavish camp follower and yes man than has been his distinguished son. It was Lord Randolph who tried to force the party to liberalize itself as Disraeli had preached it must do. "Tory democracy" was ever on his lips. Lord Randolph told his Tory elders that they must not allow the Liberal party to be the only party which cared about the well-being and progress of the masses. At one time in Parliament he had his own "cave," which from its numbers was called the "Fourth Party." He was a severe and dangerous critic of the Gladstone government. Nor did he hesitate in attacking some of the policies of his own party. Like his son, he was a maker of phrases that stuck. He called some of his political opponents the "old gang" and they could never shake off the epithet. When Gladstone was proposing a Home Rule Bill for Ireland, Lord Randolph Churchill opposed it. The people of Ulster were afraid they might be included in its

provisions. They were bitterly against any severance from the union with England. In one of his speeches he coined the famous sentence which was to become a battle cry of the Ulstermen: "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right."

When the Conservatives came back to power, so brilliant was Lord Randolph Churchill's reputation that the Prime Minister gave him the important post of Secretary of State for India. In the very next year, he was promoted to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, a cabinet post which is regarded as a steppingstone to the ultimate goal of prime minister.

The handsome, eloquent, popular Chancellor seemed destined to be the natural leader of his party when the older men stepped off the political scene. But a sudden squall arose. He differed with the cabinet about some appropriations for the army. Being overruled by his fellow ministers, he astounded the Prime Minister and stunned the country by resigning on December 23, 1886. He did not expect that his resignation would be accepted. Without him, it would be difficult to form a cabinet. In after years he confessed he "forgot Goschen." The man he referred to was George Goschen, afterwards a Viscount. He had been a

member of the Liberal party, but left it when he fought Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. He was a brilliant master of financial problems. Lord Salisbury quickly made him Chancellor and he was a very successful one. Lord Randolph Churchill never again held office. However, he continued to be a caustic critic of many of the measures discussed during his time. In 1891 he traveled in South Africa for his health and, upon returning, wrote his book, *Men, Mines and Animals in South Africa.* In the election of 1892 his constituency of South Paddington in London returned him to the House of Commons, where he distinguished himself in the fight on Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill.

When he was twenty-four and leading the life of a young man of leisure, he spent part of the summer of 1873 at Cowes, center of the yacht races, and, consequently, of fashion. All doors were, of course, open to him. It was something to be son of a duke. At Cowes he met the stunning Miss Jennie Jerome, who, with her mother and sister, was touring Europe. With him it was a case of love at first sight, a thing that was to be repeated in the story of his eldest son. The very day he met the girl, he said to an intimate friend: "There is my future wife."

But if his feelings were soon reciprocated by the pretty girl, their path was not entirely smooth. The young man's father was not pleased at the idea of an American daughter-in-law. When that obstacle was removed, the girl's father proved obdurate. The fact that his daughter had fallen in love with a young man who was the son of a duke did not particularly thrill or awe him. But what aroused his ire was the European custom of the bride bringing a dowry to her husband, who thenceforth had control over it. But that, too, was smoothed out.

If the groom's family had a long and distinguished lineage, less could be said of the bride's. Her father, Leonard W. Jerome, sprang from plain country farming folk in northern New York state. He was one of ten children. Like his brothers and sisters, he did his share of work on the farm. Like many another American country boy, they could not keep him on the farm. He worked his way through Union College, graduated when nineteen, studied law at Albany, and at twenty-two was admitted to the bar. After practicing his profession for a few years, he got into the newspaper business and became publisher of the Rochester, New York, *Native American*. In the days when it was not al-

ways safe to attack slavery, even in the North, Jerome wrote editorial after editorial denouncing the institution. After a three-year interval in which he was American Consul in Trieste, he returned to America, became a Wall Street operator and made a fortune. When the Civil War broke out, he was the largest stockholder in the *New York Times*. The paper was one of the best in New York, but it had nothing of the circulation, news coverage and prestige that Adolph Ochs secured for it when, in later years, he became its owner. Under Jerome's guidance the paper came out strongly for the Union cause. It denounced the Copperheads, who sympathized with the Southern Confederacy. It supported the Lincoln government when conscription was introduced. In 1863 occurred the draft riots in New York City. Jerome was certain that the rioters would come to sack his offices. Therefore he armed his employees with rifles and he himself remained in the building to take command in case trouble started. The rioters gave the *New York Times* a wide berth. He was an ardent admirer of General Grant, and when the latter made his bid for a third Republican nomination for the presidency and a third election to that office, Jerome supported him.

There was a time when Jerome was considered one of the "swells" of New York City. He was rich. He was on the inside of the town's most exclusive society. He was the proud owner of the first four-in-hand driven around town. He was deeply interested in racing, that sport of kings, royal and financial. He was one of the organizers of the American Jockey Club. Jerome Park was named after him. And he helped establish two other famous race courses—Sheepshead Bay and Morris Park. He lost a fortune and went right back in Wall Street to make another. He lost most of that, too, but he never lost the Jerome swagger and the Jerome popularity in that smaller New York City which now seems so distant in time.

Winston Churchill was born in London, November 30, 1874, and his early infant years were divided between Blenheim Palace and the Viceregal Lodge in Phoenix Park, Dublin, where for some time his grandfather, the seventh Duke of Marlborough, presided as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. For a child who had the great park of Blenheim Palace as his playground there was every opportunity to soak up English history at one of its fountain heads. In this park had once stood a royal palace long since destroyed. Rumor said that the

great King Alfred once dwelt there. It was certainly the favorite residence of King Henry II and his mistress, Rosamond Clifford, the "fair Rosamond" of the poets of that time. Here, too, lived King Edward III and here was born his famous son, the Black Prince. King Richard II once kept his court here. In the Civil War, the estate was held for King Charles the First until the cavaliers were routed by Cromwell's men, who sacked the place.

Blenheim Palace itself is rather an overwhelming home to have been born in. There it stands today—unless the Germans have bombed it—a splendid two-hundred-year-old stone and marble structure, 348 feet wide, surrounded by formal gardens and park lands as far as the eye can see. In front towers a column 130 feet high, surmounted by a statue of the first Duke, whose deeds are emblazoned on tablets surrounding the pedestal. Inside are portraits of the Duke and his Sarah and of many of their descendants. On the walls are tapestries depicting the Duke's greatest battles. Here was everything to intrigue the mind of a growing child, to make him proud of his ancestry, to interest him in the history of the country in which his family had played such important roles.

So far as the boy Winston was concerned, he saw little of his father and mother. From that standpoint his was a lonely life. His father was soon deep in politics. His lovely mother was soon one of the greatest favorites in the innermost social circles of London. The greatest came to her receptions and dinners and were proud to call her friend. Her famous son years later said of her: "She shone for me like the evening star. I loved her dearly—but at a distance."

However, Churchill has written that the greatest single influence on his life in its earlier stages was his father. He says he never talked with him on equal terms, but nevertheless conceived an intense admiration and affection for him. Out of that grew his habit, after Lord Randolph Churchill's death, of reading every word he had ever spoken and committing parts of his speeches to memory. Modeling his life on that of his father, he determined, when he went into politics, never to be a slavish hack, but to do his own thinking and voting. Just as his father achieved the great post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, so he dreamed of the same goal. In later years, when he had lived a full life and when he knew the social and political world of Great Britain inside out, Churchill carried out a

long unmentioned dream—that of writing a biography which would be a true and lasting monument to his father's memory.

On the rare occasions when the boy was allowed to remain up a little later than usual, he saw in his parents' house all the fixed and all the rising stars of society, politics and wealth in an England that was at the height of its power and prosperity. In later years Churchill confessed his pride in being a member of one of the few hundred great families that had governed England for generations and that had helped bring her to the glittering and powerful position she then held in world affairs.

But if he did not see very much of his parents, he could easily amuse himself. His mind filled with stories about the great Duke, he assiduously collected an army of fifteen hundred toy soldiers, representing all branches of the British armed services. With these he spent endless happy, busy hours fighting old battles over again. But this halcyon occupation came to an unhappy end when it was decided he should go to school. He was unhappy at a private institution in Ascot and not much better off in another school in Brighton.

Now, for one of his class, it was customary to go to Eton or Harrow, preferably the former, and

then on to Oxford or Cambridge. This, plus family influence at home and the spirit of noblesse oblige, made the finished perfect English gentleman. Winston's parents chose Harrow because they thought it would be better for his none too robust health, speaking from the standpoint of climate. Both at Harrow and later at Sandhurst he was a failure in so far as Latin, Greek, and mathematics were concerned.

For anyone whose aim was Parliament, Latin and Greek were considered almost indispensable. Many of the members loved to toss Latin and Greek quotations at each other. The increasing democratization of the House of Commons, especially due to the influx of members of the Labor party, has rather killed this stilted habit and given plain English more chance. Loss of Greek and Latin never hampered Winston Churchill. The joke about mathematics is that for many years he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, like his father before him, and had to juggle gigantic figures.

The boy's poor showing in Latin, Greek and mathematics—upon which such stress is still laid in English schools—led his father to the conclusion that his son would never shine in politics or at the bar. The next best thing was to put him

into the army. Martial deeds were in the blood. Lead soldiers had been his passionately loved playthings. Stories of war had been his favorite reading. So off the lad went to Sandhurst, the West Point of England. He did not dazzle meteorically in his entrance examinations, but after several abortive attempts, he finally succeeded in being accepted as a cadet. Once in, he studied with great perseverance, because military subjects were to his liking. He ranked well in his classes. He became an expert horseman. In later years, he looked back to his time at Sandhurst with deep pleasure. He looked back to his earlier school days with deep aversion. He wrote that it would have been far better had he been employed running errands or helping dress the windows of a grocery shop.

Without conscious purpose while at Sandhurst, he was also laying the foundations of the grand style he was later to display both in his orations and in his books. To the Bible and Shakespeare were added a perfect knowledge of the swelling periods of Gibbon and Macaulay. From them he learned the art which often gives to his sentences the very roll of the drums and the belligerent call of the trumpets.

In his twenty-first year, Winston Churchill's life was saddened by the death of his father on January 24, 1895. Lord Randolph Churchill had been in bad health for a long time. His death from paralysis was foreseen, but he lived long enough to take delight in his eldest son's successful graduation from Sandhurst and his induction into the armed service of the country. The boy was at his bedside when the end came to a life cut tragically short.

Chapter Three

THE YOUNG WARRIOR

On leaving Sandhurst in the spring of 1895, Winston Churchill was assigned to the Fourth Queen's Own Hussars as a subaltern. For eight months he lived the semi-idle life of a gentleman officer in peace time. That is, he passed part of each day drilling his men, inspecting them and their horses and taking part in maneuvers. In his leisure hours he ran up to London to eat good dinners, to go to the theatre, and to dance in great houses. This was the era of British splendor, with nothing but occasional little wars somewhere in the Empire, with no foreboding of the black war clouds that were nearly to engulf these tight isles some twenty years later. Churchill's name was the open sesame to all the desirable houses he wished to enter.

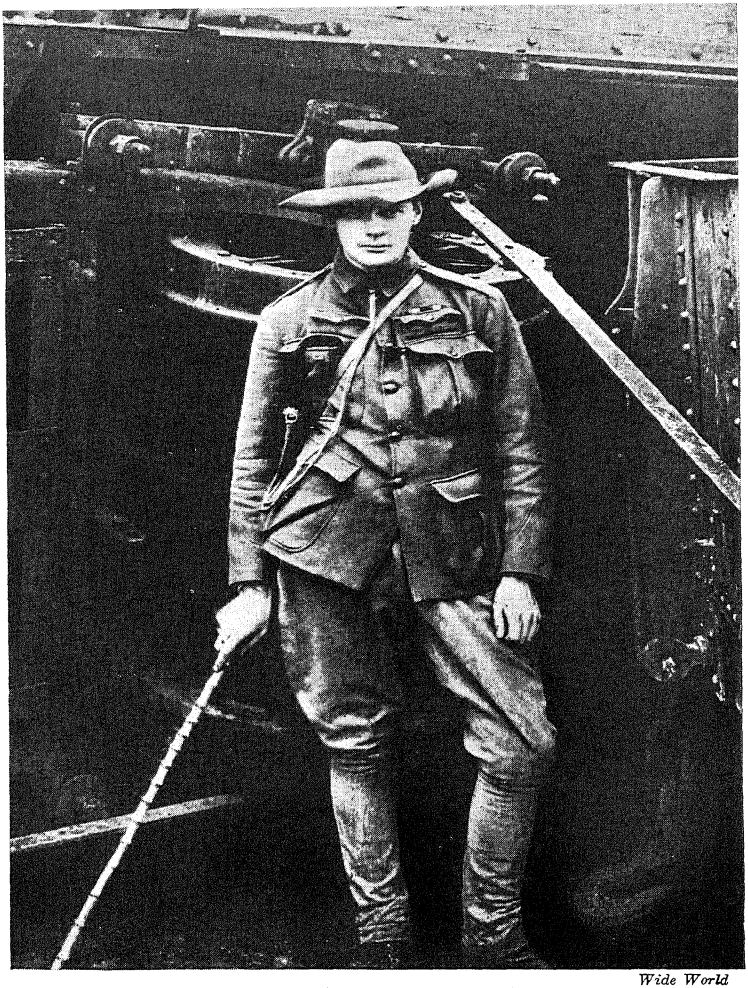
But very shortly this life palled. He was rapidly getting nowhere. He wanted action. He wanted to see the outside world. He wanted to line his purse with money. For years this desire for money

was an obsession with him, the result not of avarice but of cruel necessity. He had a noble lineage but no patrimony. As a soldier he needed far more than his slender pay allowed. As a politician and, later, as a king's minister, he needed money even more badly. As a matter of fact, it was not until comparatively late in life that he became independent. A legacy from a relative helped, but it was his writing and his lectures that made him a free man.

As young Churchill looked around the world, the only "show" that promised action and glory was on in full swing in Cuba. That rich island was having one of its periodic revolutions against the rather stringent and unintelligent Spanish rule. Marshal Martinez de Campos was getting ready to lead an expedition to suppress the rebels. In the days of Churchill's ancestor Marlborough it was often necessary for a young officer with no money and few court connections to prove himself on the battlefields of the Continent in order to obtain recognition in the English Army. Perhaps it was an unconscious recollection of the foolhardy deeds of the young Marlborough to obtain recognition, as in his acceptance of Turenne's bet, that led young Churchill to go off seeking adventure. At any rate

his family connections and friendships enabled him to pull the right strings, and in the winter of 1895 he landed in Havana. In his pocket he had an extra weapon—a contract to act as Cuban war correspondent for a London newspaper. They had taken him on chance, but it was a very inexpensive chance, since the contract called for a very limited number of articles and the pay for these was to be twenty-five dollars apiece.

When Churchill rode with the Spanish forces into the semi-jungle of the Cuban hinterland, he found the real war much different than he had imagined. Instead of long lines of soldiers drawn up in battle array, the fighting consisted of guerilla warfare, with small detachments ambushing and being ambushed, and with danger lurking behind every tree and clump of grass. However, this was valuable experience for the young soldier; here he had his baptism of fire and here he proved to himself that he could take it. The campaign netted him his first medal—the Spanish Order of Military Merit, first-class. Furthermore, his experiences as a war correspondent inspired in him the belief that he had the makings of a writer. For many years he considered himself, no matter whether he was soldiering or governing, as a newspaperman too.



Wide World

After escaping from the Boers, Churchill returns to visit the scene of his capture

Acme

Churchill in court dress shortly after the Boer War

Not long after Churchill returned from Cuba, his regiment was ordered to India. Never a good linguist, he made no attempt to learn any of the commonly used languages of the country. Instead, he threw his energies into the everyday grind of a soldier and discovered a new game—polo, which he played very well. He was in England on furlough when he learned that the crafty and warlike Pathans on the Northwest Frontier were stirring up trouble again. The government was getting ready to send an expedition against them. Its leader was to be a veteran with the very appropriate name of Bindon Blood.

Churchill decided that this little war was too good a thing to miss, so early in 1897 he got himself attached to the 31st Punjab Infantry. This expedition promised to be much more satisfactory than the one in Cuba. The Pathans were brave and cunning mountain men who valued their rifles above everything else. They knew every pass and every turning in the lofty foothills of the Himalayas. They were experts in the art of taking cover. It was said that the only time a Pathan was not a dead shot was when he was shot dead. Before sailing for India, however, Churchill got a contract to write for the *London Daily Telegraph*, and in India

he was named war correspondent for the famed *Allahabad Pioneer*. The "little" war turned out to be quite a sanguinary conflict for all its size, and as usual Churchill managed to get into the thick of it, as his mention in despatches and another medal would indicate. Although his life was in danger a number of times, fortune favored him and he lived to write his first book, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force*, which appeared in 1898.

This book was hardly finished when another little war broke out—this time an uprising of the Afridis beyond the Khyber pass. Churchill was attached as an orderly officer to the staff of Sir William Lockhart, commander of the Tirah Expeditionary Force, and for his services under fire received a clasp to the medal he had already won.

No sooner had Churchill reported back to his regiment in Bangalore than he heard of another military expedition. This time in the Sudan. The Sudan territory to the south of Egypt had at one time been under the control of Egypt, but an Arab fanatic claiming to have the divine protection of Allah, one called the Mahdi, had collected an army and proceeded to carry his will over the Sudan by fire and sword. The British, who at the time were in actual but politely concealed control of Egypt,

ordered the Sudan evacuated and the famous "Chinese" Gordon was sent to Khartoum to see that this was done. But the Mahdi overran the country surrounding Khartoum and for many months General Gordon and his pitifully small garrison stood siege. Finally, in 1885, the walls of the town were weakened by a flood, the Arabs entered, and Gordon was cruelly murdered. For many years the Sudan seethed with unrest. The Mahdi died and was succeeded by a leader called the Khalifa, who also claimed divine protection. It was the Khalifa's purpose to conquer the whole of Egypt, but he found himself too busy suppressing insurrections in his own territory. In 1896 it was decided that the Sudan must be wrested from the control of the Khalifa and his militant Arabs, and the job of reconquering it was given to General Kitchener, later creator of the "new" British Armies who fought so bravely in France.

Churchill moved heaven and earth, and even budged a few of the mighty ministers in Whitehall, in his desire to take part in the Kitchener expedition. But the cold, hard-faced Sirdar (Commander) of the Egyptian Armies turned a deaf ear to every appeal made on Churchill's behalf. He did not care overly much for subalterns who car-

ried a sword in one hand and a pen in the other. Besides, this young man was too impossible; he broke all the rules. He did not hesitate to criticize his august superiors. He called a spade a spade and a mistake a mistake. The last refusal Kitchener made to the Prime Minister—Lord Salisbury—himself. He regretted it very much, but every place, even the smallest, was filled, and he had a long waiting list of ambitious young officers.

Not to be put off so easily, Churchill discovered that there was more than one way to kill a cat—in this case, to get to Egypt. He found out that the Egyptian troops were to be stiffened by several seasoned British regiments. And best of all, the War Office, not Kitchener, had control over the British contingent. Churchill got himself named supernumerary lieutenant in the 21st Lancers. This meant that he would have to go to Egypt at his own expense. But there were always newspapers! He got, as usual, a commission to act as war correspondent. This time he was to be paid seventy-five dollars a column—and from the *London Morning Post* at that. That ultra-Tory paper had not yet fallen onto the evil days that were to mark its demise. It was well financed by wealthy men and had a power that far exceeded its circulation.

To write for it was to be assured of a very select and influential audience.

In Egypt Churchill found that his reputation had preceded him, and he was hardly given a rousing cheer from the British officers who were his superiors in rank. They made it clear to him that he was a greenhorn as far as desert warfare was concerned. They gave him the toughest jobs.

Kitchener had taken his time in the Sudan. His supply ships traveled on the Nile, guarded by gunboats. On land he often constructed railway lines. Always he pushed south, but always he first made sure of his communications. And always he marched toward Khartoum, the tragic city where Gordon met his death and where the Khalifa made his headquarters. There were plenty of skirmishes on the way. The nights were often broken by attacks and alarms. But Kitchener bided his time till he could confront the main body of the Khalifa's army. That opportunity came at last at Omdurman, some miles to the north of Khartoum. On September 2, 1898, the final clash occurred. It was marked by the courageous stand of the British square, invincible in this type of warfare, and the famous cavalry charge, a charge like many of those classic ones in the American Civil War. The 21st

Lancers made the cavalry charge and Churchill was with the Lancers. As in his other battles, he had many narrow escapes but came out whole. His part in the scrimmage won him another medal with a clasp. And his memories of the campaign gave him the material for a new book, *The River War*, which was published in 1899.

While he liked the military life and fighting, Churchill realized that he was no leader like his great ancestor. Looking around for something else to do, he naturally turned to politics as his father had before him. Naturally, he was a Conservative. And naturally he wanted to be elected to the House of Commons. The Conservative party machine tried him out on the stump. Sometimes he stuttered. He also lisped because of a defective palate. But he had something to say and a fresh way of saying it. He managed to get his audiences interested. These were the freshman years for the future resplendent orator.

The Conservative party machine gave him one of the nominations for a by-election in the Oldham district in industrial Lancashire in the summer of 1899. It was no generous gift on the machine's part. Oldham was a debatable constituency. The labor element was strong there and working people

were not particularly fond of the Conservative party. The machine reserved its safe seats for cabinet members and rich party hacks who could always be relied upon to contribute liberally to the party funds and to vote as their leader in Parliament indicated. Churchill was not only a beginner, but a novice who had no money. He made a vigorous campaign, but was beaten by thirteen hundred votes.

He did not have much time to brood over his lack of success. In the offing was a new war. Down in the southern half of Africa Great Britain had two colonies, the Cape Colony and Natal. The tip of the continent had originally been colonized by the Boers, a sturdy people mainly of Dutch descent with a slight admixture of French. To get away from the English, they moved further north, just as the Mormons in the nineteenth century tried to get away from the United States by trekking west and settling and developing the desert that was Utah. The Boers had two little republics—Transvaal, presided over by the formidable "Oom" Paul Kruger, and the Orange Free State. The Transvaal especially whetted the appetites of Britons with colonial dreams and adventurers with an eye on the rich gold and diamond mines. Doctor Jameson,

with the connivance of men in high places, had not so many years before led an abortive raid on the Transvaal. After that, the two Boer republics, with an eye to future eventualities, began procuring arms, mainly from Germany. President Kruger brought matters to a head when he sent Britain an ultimatum demanding that it withdraw its armed forces from the frontiers of the republic. Within a very few days, the ultimatum having expired, the two little republics were at war with mighty Britain.

The moment the ultimatum was made public, Churchill got in touch with the publishers of the *Morning Post* of London and obtained a contract which emphasized the reputation his fights and his books about them had made. He was to go to South Africa as a war correspondent with a salary of $1250 per month and a guarantee of at least four months. This clause was instructive. Britons in general thought it would be a very short and very inexpensive war. They were quickly undeceived; the Boers were stubborn enemies and the war cost Britain heavily in dead and wounded and in money.

Churchill sailed for Africa on October 11, 1899, in the ship that carried Sir Redvers Buller and his

staff. Buller, who had quite a reputation, was to be commander-in-chief and father of victory. As a matter of fact, he fumbled and for months the war was a lost war. By the time Churchill got to South Africa, the British forces had already suffered a disastrous defeat and considerable numbers were being besieged by the Boers in the little town of Ladysmith.

Churchill went forward to Eastcourt, some forty miles from Ladysmith. Here he met an old army friend, who was about to take an armored train of six cars to reconnoiter. Churchill was given the opportunity to go along. When the train had gone about fourteen miles, an "accident" happened on the track. The engineer endeavored to back, but could not. The Boers had evidently laid a trap for the British forces. A sharp fight took place, during which many of the British were killed or wounded. It was impossible to get the train away. Many of the little force were captured, among them being Churchill. He had drawn his pistol and was going to fire it at the first Boer who came his way, but he gave up. A horseman had him covered with his rifle.

Years later, when he was a prominent member of the British cabinet, he sat next to General

Louis Botha, one of the best of the Boer leaders in the field, who later became the first premier of the great self-governing Dominion of South Africa and who, in World War I, led the British forces in capturing German Southwest Africa. Churchill was telling him about his Boer War adventure. "I was the man you tried to kill," said the famous fellow-guest.

Together with other prisoners, Churchill was locked up in the State Model School in the Boer Capital of Pretoria. To a man of Churchill's temperament, imprisonment seemed worse than death. Big things were going on and here he was locked up. He and two officers planned to make their escape by means of a window in the lavatory. Churchill got out. The others failed. By great good luck he escaped being seen by the sentries, crawled through some bushes and stepped out—into wide Africa. He had some hundreds of dollars' worth of pounds sterling, a few bars of chocolate and a couple of biscuits. He was without any knowledge of Boer Dutch or Kaffir, the language of the native tribes. He knew the nearest Portuguese colony was about three hundred miles away. He was also sure that when his escape was known parties would start in search for him and that rewards would be

offered for his arrest. His surmise was correct, for the Boers offered $125 for his capture dead or alive. Their posters asked people to look for: "An Englishman of indifferent build, walking with a forward stoop, pale appearance, red brownish hair, small and hardly noticeable moustache, talks through his nose and cannot pronounce the letter *s* properly."

With the exception that his hair has gone very thin and that the moustache was cut off long ago, the picture the Boers drew of him holds good to this day.

After walking for some time, Churchill came to a railway track. He did not know whether it led to the Portuguese colony or right smack into more Boer territory. He followed it for two hours, dodged around a solitary station and hid in a ditch. After a long wait, a train came along. It carried freight. He managed to scramble aboard one of the cars, which was filled with empty sacks in which coal had been carried. The sacks were now being taken back to the colliery. Churchill buried himself beneath some of these and had a good sleep. When he awoke it was still dark. He thought he had better get off the train to have a look around. He jumped and, with Churchill luck,

escaped injury. He hid all day. He had a bite of his precious chocolate and a long drink from a pool.

At night he waited for another train. But none came. His plan to travel like an American tramp stealing rides failed. In the distance he saw some lights burning. His guess was that they were Kaffir kraals. He had heard that the Kaffirs were favorable to the British, because the Boer farmers treated them harshly. Churchill resolved to take a chance. The distance was greater than he thought. It took him nearly two hours to reach the lights and then he found he was in a mining village. If the people were Boers, he was lost. He knocked at a door. The owner opened it and asked what he wanted this late in the night. Churchill told a cock and bull story about being a Boer who had lost his way from his regiment. The man asked him to come inside and tell him more. Churchill took a bold chance. He revealed who he was. His host got up and locked the door, telling him he was lucky to have bumped into a British house. The Boers had allowed a few Britons to continue at their work in running the colliery. Churchill's host was John Howard, manager of the colliery. He lived to see Churchill attain greatness. In fact, he died early in 1941 back in his native England.

Howard fed the hungry man, concealed him for six days down in one of the mines until the hue and cry for Churchill's arrest died down, and arranged to send him to Delagoa Bay in a freight car loaded with bales of wool. The British Consul in Lourenco Marques at once arranged for his passage on a steamer back to Durban. Resuming his status as a subaltern in the Queen's Own, Churchill took part in the concluding and victorious battles of the Boer War.

The story of his escape had made him celebrated back home. It was one of the great escape stories of all time. But his fate was to find brickbats as well as bouquets. Just as, after the Spanish-American War, when F. P. Dunne had his Mr. Dooley say Theodore Roosevelt's account of the Rough Riders should have been entitled "Alone in Cuba," so one hostile London paper practically asked whether Churchill had been alone in South Africa. But that was a minor thorn. Upon his return from the war, he found his stock rated high. He left the army in July, 1900 and decided to make another contest for a seat in the House of Commons. Many seats were offered the new celebrity, but he delighted Oldham by saying he preferred to run there once again. The voters rallied to him with enthu-

siasm and sang right lustily a campaign song which proclaimed:

"You've heard of Winston Churchill;
This is all I need to say—
He's the latest and the greatest
Correspondent of the day."

It was probably the first and only time in English-speaking countries that a candidate for office was heroized because he was a good newspaperman. He was easily elected.

Churchill now turned his attention to his finances. The Boer War gave him the opportunity to write two successful books, both published in 1900—*Ian Hamilton's March* and *London to Ladysmith via Pretoria.* He made a lecture tour in Great Britain and then set sail for the United States, where he lectured in many big cities. People were keen to see this young hero and hear his own narrative of his remarkable escape. He had the additional attraction of being half American. But he bewildered them. In Cincinnati, for instance, he spoke to a packed house. The middle westerners could not detect a trace of Americanism in this red, moon-faced young man with the promi-

nent blue eyes, the scarcely concealed lisp and the all-British pronunciation. But once they got over their puzzlement about this, they listened to him with enthralled attention because the lecturer gave a masterly presentation of his lonely adventure under the African stars. His lecture tours in Britain and America netted him about $30,000. His books gained him another $20,000. Young and unmarried and footloose, he thought his fortune was made.

Chapter Four

THE RISING POLITICIAN

On January 23, 1901, Churchill made his first appearance in the hallowed precincts of the House of Commons. Four days later he broke a number of precedents. New members are expected to make their maiden speech, but they are also expected to wait for a suitable interval until they know the ropes. Churchill spoke after four days as an active M.P. Cynical oldsters dubbed him "young-man-in-a-hurry." It was a remarkable house he addressed. Arthur Balfour, the philosopher-statesman and aristocrat, was the leader of the house. Second in command for the Conservative party was the redoubtable Joseph Chamberlain, whose son Austen was likewise some day to hold high posts and whose other son, Neville, was to be a prime minister of evil omen. A little raven-haired Welsh lawyer led a small fraction of the opposition. He was destined to be Britain's man of the hour in World War I, just as Churchill was destined for the same role in the present world conflict. The Welshman

was David Lloyd George. Many figures who are now prominent in British politics were not even members of Parliament at that time.

The government was being bitterly attacked for its management of the Boer War, which was still dragging on. Churchill based his first speech on this subject. He defended the army, saying it would readily accord a brave foe the honors of war. He was so much in deadly earnest that he stammered more than usual, but on the whole his speech was well received. Parliament is always generous to young men who make their first speech. Not so long afterwards the War Secretary presented army estimates which called for the organization of six new army corps. Again Churchill spoke, this time in opposition to his own party's cabinet. The speech contained two main lines:

First: there was grave apprehension in the country over the continual growth of purely military expenditure.

Second: there was an insistent call from the taxpayers for retrenchment and economy.

These pronouncements from the young M.P. sound strange today when we know that later he was called a militarist and, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was denounced for "reckless extravagance."

He voted against his party. He spoke against it. He continued his agitation against the army bill. The future indomitable defender of Britain said: "The professional soldier is an artificial luxury, very expensive to keep, withdrawn both from the family and industrial life of the nation. Consequently, we should have as few of him as possible."

The youngster, most of whose life had been spent in soldiering, was indignant that the government should propose to have an army of 150,000 in Britain.

Churchill became a marked man, but not in the way he had hoped. When Arthur Balfour succeeded Lord Salisbury as prime minister and reconstructed the cabinet, not even as much as a crumb from the top table fell to Churchill. It was a snub which rankled.

In 1903 the Conservative party was split wide open. Joseph Chamberlain made a famous speech in Birmingham, talking about free trade within the Empire. He really meant imperial preference in tariffs within the Empire and some measure of protective tariff against the rest of the world. Churchill made speeches stating that free trade was the historic policy of the nation and the real basis of its world trade. At one time angry Con-

servatives stalked out while he was talking. The Conservatives at Oldham said he had lost their confidence. His reply to all this was a speech in which he denounced his party as one belonging to the vested interests, whose policies were dear food for the million, cheap labor for the millionaire. On May 31, 1903, he finally made up his mind. He walked away from the Conservative benches and took a seat beside Lloyd George. It was something of a nine days' wonder. A young and brilliant aristocrat of the ancient family of Churchill had gone over to the party of the masses. He had spoken bitter words demanding a cabinet that would think more about toilers in the bottom of a mine than about fat speculators watching the stock ticker.

Many of the top drawer in British society gave him the cold shoulder. But Churchill was busy with a project that had been close to his heart from his days of adolescence. He wrote a biography of his father, which appeared in 1906 and had a very large sale in Britain. It was more than a biography. It was a loyal fighting vindication of his father.

The leaders of the Liberal party welcomed their new convert. They recognized in him, young as he was, a good two-fisted fighter. He was made their

candidate in one of the districts in the great industrial city of Manchester in 1906. His opponent was Joynson-Hicks, a great church layman, who in later years was to be a cabinet colleague of Churchill's and labeled by the cartoonists as "Jix," a convenient shortening of his two-barreled name. The biggest reproach Churchill encountered in his campaign was that he was a renegade, that he had ratted from his party. His constant reply was an epigram: "Some men change their party for the sake of their principles, some change their principles for the sake of their party. I stick to principles."

He won the election by a majority of 1,241. The Liberals won all over the country. In fact, it was a landslide. Prime Minister Balfour himself was defeated. Most of his colleagues also lost. The new House of Commons had 377 Liberals, 53 Laborites, 157 Conservatives and 83 Irish Nationalists. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, as Premier, gave the new recruit the post of Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. As the Secretary was in the House of Lords, it fell to Churchill to defend the department's interests in the House of Commons. He helped put through the liberal constitution by which Cape Colony, Natal and conquered Trans-

vaal and Orange Free State were all to be combined in the Dominion of the Union of South Africa. Churchill made reasoned speeches setting forth the wisdom of a plan which really gave the Boers a chance for home rule. They are in the majority in the dominion and from the beginning Boers—Botha, Smuts and Hertzog—have been the prime ministers of the Dominion. In this post Churchill also had to handle matters in connection with two trouble points—India and Ireland. In later years they were subjects of some of his greatest exertions in Parliament. He was made a member of the Privy Council in 1907 and in the same year visited the African colonies, the better to understand the job of governing them. Once more his activities gave rise to a book—*My African Journey*, published in 1908.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman died in 1908 and was succeeded by H. H. Asquith, who promptly named Churchill to his cabinet as President of the Board of Trade. At that period unwritten law required that when a man was named to the cabinet, he should resign from the House of Commons and run for election, so that his constituents could pass upon him. He ran in Manchester, was savagely heckled by the women suffragists and was beaten

by his old rival, "Jix," the vote being 5517 to 4988. A seat was vacant in Dundee and the Scottish Liberals promptly asked him to run there. He beat all his opponents by nearly 7000 votes. The women suffragists did not accomplish much in that Liberal stronghold.

A much bigger event for Churchill occurred in 1908. Following in his father's footsteps, he fell in love at first sight. The lady of his heart was the lovely Clementine Hozier, daughter of Colonel H. M. Hozier and granddaughter of the Countess of Airlie. They were married in ultra-fashionable St. Margaret's Church, the little structure which stands at the side of Westminster Abbey. The happy husband penned the loveliest of tributes to his wife: "In September, 1908, I married and I lived happily ever after."

In the course of this biography it will be necessary to show how frequently Churchill was a prophet whose prophecies came true. But here is a remarkable thing: the man who was destined to be the most formidable foe of Germany wrote in 1908, after two visits to that country in the days of Kaiser Wilhelm II, that it was a fundamental error to assume that a profound antagonism existed between Germany and England.

Those cabinet days marked the beginning of a close friendship with Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. In Germany, to steal the thunder of the powerful Socialist party, the Kaiser had secured passage of social legislation which tackled the problem of caring for the unemployed and the aged.

Lloyd George and Churchill decided that those laws were good things. They proceeded to give Britain an even better and more extensive "new deal" than Germany had. As President of the Board of Trade, Churchill introduced an old age pension bill, one limiting the hours miners would have to work and one providing for labor exchanges in the battle against unemployment. He also established a court of industrial conciliation in the endeavor to prevent strikes.

In 1909 began one of the most memorable battles in the history of British politics. Lloyd George, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced his first budget. It laid heavy taxes on the rich. It was called a revolutionary bill. The word "Bolshevik" was not known to the world at that time, but the aristocracy and the capitalists looked upon "L.G." as one. He replied in a savage and famous speech in the Limehouse district of London. The House of Com-

mons passed the budget by a huge majority. The House of Lords, as expected, rejected it by 350 to 75. Then the Liberals began a campaign to curtail the powers of the House of Lords. If "L.G." led in this, he had an able and equally eloquent and bitter lieutenant in Churchill. British audiences thronged to hear the grandson of a duke denounce the House of Lords as an effete relic which defied the rights of the Commons elected by the plain people. The Lords, he said, were responsible to no one and represented no one but themselves.

He and Lloyd George set the pace for all meetings by calling the contest one of "Lords versus the People." Great play was made about wealthy dukes. Churchill assured the dukes that in future, when the tax collectors came around, they would not ask, "What have you got?" but would say, "Where did you get it?"

The Duke of Rutland wrathfully exclaimed that the proponents of the budget were "pirates." Churchill expected an explosion from that source and was ready for him. He gleefully quoted the asinine verses written by an earlier Duke of Rutland:

"Let wealth and commerce, law and learning die
But leave us still our old nobility."

In the election of 1910 the voters of Dundee sent Churchill back to Parliament. But the party as a whole lost so many seats to the Conservatives that it had to depend for a majority upon the votes of Labor and Irish Nationalist deputies. Churchill was made Home Secretary—a post roughly equivalent to that of Secretary of the Interior in the United States.

In April, 1910, a partially tamed House of Lords passed the much hated budget. The government at once began to push a bill for the reformation of the House of Lords. It was really a bill to shear the Lords of practically all their power. The Die-Hards, a term invented during this political battle, prepared to beat the bill in the House of Lords over and over again. Fighting stopped momentarily when King Edward VII died, but was resumed as soon as King George V had been on the throne for a short period. It was resolved by the government to dissolve Parliament and go to the country once more in an election. The voters chose 272 Liberals, 272 Conservatives, 42 Laborites and 76 Irish Nationalists. Labor and the Irish voted with the Liberals in passing a bill which deprived the House of Lords of power to hold up money bills, and which further provided

that if a bill was passed in three successive sessions in the House of Commons, it became law, despite an adverse vote by the Lords. All the fight was taken out of the Die-Hard Lords when it became known that Premier Asquith had a promise from the King that, if necessary to pass the bill, he would create enough new peers to give the government a majority. On August 10, therefore, the Lords passed a measure which was the death warrant of their long-held power.

In times of peace, London, like all great cities, gets worked up only by local sensations and in the period 1910-11 it had a big one in the Russian scare. It was said the underworld of London was infested by dangerous Russian anarchists and nihilists, led by a Lett called Peter the Painter. Their particular dwelling quarter was the crowded East End of the city. Many crimes of assault and robbery were laid at their door. Whitechapel was terrorized, just as some years before it had been scared by the mysterious murderer known as Jack the Ripper. Things culminated when a policeman was shot in Houndsditch. The crime was at once attributed to Peter the Painter's gang. A hot search was made for the criminals and, at last, on January 3, 1911, the police thought they had them

surrounded in a house at 100 Sidney Street. The Home Office telephoned Churchill that the desperadoes had barricaded themselves and were firing at the police. He hurried to the scene himself and thus began the celebrated "siege of Sidney Street." Churchill walked down the street through a hail of bullets from the besieged men. He called out some troops to assist the police. The house caught fire.

Churchill directed a police inspector to break down the entrance door to the building. He and a police sergeant went in with the inspector. They found two dead men. One had been hit by a policeman's bullet. The other man had been suffocated by smoke from the blaze. No other men were found. Churchill did not escape without criticism. Arthur Balfour, leader of the Tory opposition to the Liberal government, acidly said he could understand police, firemen and troops—and even newspaper photographers—being present, but what on earth was the Home Secretary doing there?

In the meantime, relations between England and Germany were steadily getting worse. A German firm had complained that the French authorities in Morocco made difficulties for them. All Europe was shaken when the Kaiser on July 1, 1911, sent the warship *Panther* to the Moroccan port of Aga-

dir. Nothing serious happened, but it aroused the quiet Asquith into action. In October, 1911, he made Churchill First Lord of the Admiralty. He wanted in that key job a man of boundless energy and initiative. Churchill gave the Admiralty a much-needed shaking up. He put younger men in the important jobs, he had bigger guns placed upon battleships and, far in advance of most of his naval advisers, proceeded to develop a stronger air arm for the navy. When the Kaiser made a speech indicating that Germany was going to greatly increase its navy with big ships, Churchill was on a visit to Glasgow shipyards. He at once replied to the German ruler in a speech in which he said that to Germany a big navy was a luxury, whereas to Britain, with its far-flung trade and empire, it was a necessity. Naval building went on actively in both nations. In February, 1913, and again in October Churchill spoke in the House of Commons advocating a naval holiday between Germany and Britain. Such a holiday would have left Britain the stronger in ships in active service. The Germans did not reply. The result was that the First Lord, in his naval estimates presented to Parliament, called for the building of a whole division of big fast battleships with 15-inch guns.

While he was fighting to strengthen Britain at sea for the war he was sure would come, the country was being weakened at home by serious disturbances. The Irish Republican Army was busy in Ireland. The people of southern Ireland were demanding home rule. They wanted Ulster included. The majority in Ulster objected. Churchill was for treating with the Irish. He did this in the first place because the government majority depended upon the support of the Irish in the House of Commons. In the second place, he felt it was necessary in this dangerous period to have a pacified Ireland. The cabinet got him to introduce an Irish home rule bill. The friends of Ulster were infuriated at him. They cast into his teeth his own father's famous slogan: "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right." In Ulster they really began gathering arms and drilling a volunteer corps. In the meantime, at the sight of Ulstermen arming, the southern Irish also began gathering arms. On May 15, 1914, a Home Rule Bill, satisfactory to nobody in Ireland, was passed and became law without assent of the House of Lords, as it had been passed by three successive sessions of the Commons. The King signed the bill September 17, but subsequent legislation postponed its operation until after the war.

Chapter Five

WORLD WAR AND AFTERMATH

On July 18, 1914, under the proud eye of Winston Churchill and for the delectation of King George V, the main part of the British Navy in all its panoply and power passed before a given point. It took the some two hundred naval vessels, steaming rapidly, a full six hours to parade. Ordinarily at this time of year ships would be called from various stations for maneuvers and then once more be dispersed to their given posts. But this time Churchill kept them all together. A few days after the review, he sent secret warning telegrams ordering the main war vessels to go to their war stations in the North Sea. Churchill now had them where they would be ready to do battle instantly with the German fleet if war came and the enemy fleet ventured out.

On August 4, 1914, sober-faced cabinet officers gathered in the Prime Minister's house at 10 Downing Street. Britain had given Germany an ultimatum expiring at 11 P. M., Greenwich time.

Famous Big Ben in the Parliament house slowly boomed out eleven strokes. Germany had not replied to Britain. The two countries were now at war. Churchill briskly walked down Whitehall to the Admiralty. The message he had already written was now flashed to the navy all over the world: "Commence hostilities at once against Germany."

The watch dogs of the sea were ready.

During the long weary course of the war Churchill was responsible in part for two expeditions which failed, but which might have been successful had the government given wholehearted and prompt support.

In the first weeks of the war the huge German armies came crashing through Belgium. Late in September, 1914, detachments began the bombardment of the great port of Antwerp. That city's troops threatened the flank of the German army. If Antwerp fell, there was nothing for the Belgian forces to do but retreat westward, leaving the main Belgian ports in German hands. The Belgian government appealed to Britain for help. All Lord Kitchener could find for the occasion was the Royal Naval Division, in part made up of untrained young men. Churchill not only urged that they be sent, but went along with them as their

commander in the post of danger. The British had promised reinforcements of troops, but they never came. Antwerp, with its gallant defenders, held out long enough for a considerable number of the regular Belgian army to get away. On October 10 the city surrendered. Churchill got the blame for the whole affair, although the cabinet had approved it and had acquiesced in his going to Belgium to lead the desperate effort.

The Gallipoli campaign was also largely of Churchill's making. Russia was pressing the Allies for action which would open the Dardanelles, so they could supply her with much-needed arms and munitions. In the west, the lives of men were being frittered away in fruitless battles. Churchill's keen mind grasped the idea that if the Dardanelles could be forced and held, Constantinople would be at the mercy of the Allies and they would have a strong chance of putting Turkey out of the war completely. If this were done, the Allies could then attack the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the flank. Such a move would also keep Bulgaria out of the war.

Early in 1915 the British sent a fleet of warships, mainly made up of older battleships. The French also sent some war vessels. In February

the naval forces bombarded the shore batteries on Gallipoli peninsula several times. On March 3 Admiral de Robeck reported that the Straits could not be forced unless one shore of the peninsula or the other was occupied and that no progress would be possible without the help of an army. Nevertheless, he was ordered to continue the attempt and on March 18 a big action occurred, during which a number of naval vessels were hit by Turkish shore batteries. The British ships *Irresistible*, *Inflexible* and *Ocean* and the French battleship *Bouvet* were hit and were later sunk by enemy mines. Belatedly troops in numbers were sent, many of them being the famous Anzacs—soldiers from Australia and New Zealand. As Kitchener claimed he needed all his spare troops on the western front and as little visible progress had been made in Gallipoli, the troops were withdrawn in December, 1915 and January, 1916. Churchill got the main blame for the vain loss of men and ships. The truth is that the cabinet never fully supported the campaign. And the irony is that twice, if the Allies had only known it, the enemy was nearly at the end of his resources and had the attack been pressed victory would have resulted. In a number of political campaigns after that,

when Churchill appeared on the stump, hostile hecklers yelled "Antwerp" and "Gallipoli" at him.

In 1915 Prime Minister Asquith handed to Churchill a bitter cup. Asquith had arranged with the leader of the Conservative party for a coalition government to carry on the war. The Conservatives insisted that the Admiralty post must be given to Arthur Balfour. Churchill was given the sinecure of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. To soften the blow, Asquith retained him as a member of the War Council. But the blow hurt. Here was a war in which England's fate was involved and Churchill, conscious of his powers, could only be a spectator. In later years he spoke bitterly of having to watch the feeble execution of plans he himself had launched and of his long hours of utterly unwanted leisure.

He did not endure this leisure for long. If he could not serve in the government at home, he would serve as a soldier at the front. So he went to the House of Commons for a farewell speech, trained for a time with the Grenadier Guards in their trenches in France and was named Lieutenant Colonel of the 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers. After some fighting at the front, he returned to his seat in the House of Commons. It had been conveyed

to him that influential forces were becoming deeply dissatisfied with Asquith's conduct of the war. More vigorous action was required. Churchill spoke in the Commons on the need for a more active campaign against the submarines.

Better times were coming for him. In December, 1916 Asquith fell and Lloyd George became the head of the coalition government. Scorning all the opposition to his move, he named Churchill Minister of Munitions July 16, 1917. It was a job that would absorb all his enormous energy. He must provide the army and navy of Great Britain with their ever-increasing needs. The Italians also looked to him for some supplies. And the United States wanted a half-billion dollars worth of artillery for the big army it was beginning to send to France. He got the production that was required. Only once did he have trouble. In some factories the munition workers threatened to strike. Churchill's answer was terse. If they struck, he would see to it that they were conscripted and sent to the fighting in France. There was no strike.

On Nov. 11, 1918, all the leaders in the Allied countries had their glorious day of triumph. The war was over and well won. The astute politician, Lloyd George, saw a chance to assure a long lease

of power to the government. So, in 1918, the "khaki" elections were held. Production of munitions was now no longer needed, and Lloyd George astounded the country and angered some of the envious by giving Churchill two posts in the cabinet. He made him Minister of War and of the Air. The new minister had the big task of demobilizing armies containing millions of men and bringing them back to peacetime pursuits. But he also busied himself with something which brought down on his head much criticism. He loathed the Bolshevism which had taken Russia out of the war, increased the burden of the Allies, and made the war tasks of the Germans much easier. When the Big Four—Lloyd George, Wilson, Clemenceau and Orlando—decided to give support to the White Russians in their endeavors to overthrow the Bolsheviks, Churchill threw himself into the job with all his nervous intensity. But the war-weary people of Great Britain did not care for any further adventures. Churchill prepared, therefore, to evacuate the Allied troops from Archangel and Murmansk, but sent volunteers to take their places. He sent supplies and money to Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin and the other White adventurers who promised so much and eventually did so little. This

assistance cost England about two hundred million dollars and gave the opponents of the government another campaign cry.

In the spring of 1921 Churchill was transferred to the Colonial office. One of the first things he tackled was the troublesome situation in the Middle East. The Arabs, who had helped Britain during the war, were disappointed because their dream of a big Arabian kingdom had not been realized. In Iraq, then called Mesopotamia, the natives had rebelled against the British. It had required the sending of a considerable body of troops and had cost a good deal of money to bring peace—so much so that the soldiers called the country "Mess-Pot" instead of the official abbreviation "Mespot." Churchill took swift action. The Emir Feisal was made king of Iraq as an independent state, Britain agreeing to defend it with part of the Royal Air Force. The territory to the east of the Jordan river was split off from Palestine proper, named Transjordania, and Emir Abdullah, Feisal's brother, was named king.

Not less pressing and closer to home was the question of Ireland. During the war, on Easter Day, 1916, the Sinn Fein seized the post office and other important points in Dublin and gave battle

for some days. In the general election of 1918 the Sinn Feiners captured 73 out of the 106 seats in Ireland. The newly elected members refused to go to London to attend Parliament. Instead, they constituted themselves as a Dail (assembly), declared Ireland's independence, and named ministers. This took place January 21, 1919, and almost at once a ruinous and savage war started. The Sinn Feiners killed sympathizers with the British Government and destroyed much property. The British Government finally sent a force of nearly six thousand men, mainly ex-soldiers, to do battle. From their uniforms, they were called Black and Tans. This force fought terror with terror, killing with killing. Premier Lloyd George got in touch with Eamon de Valera, a truce was called, and a conference was held in London, beginning on October 10, 1921. The main representatives of the government were Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead and Winston Churchill. The main Irish representatives were Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins, who had become an almost legendary hero during the fighting in Ireland. The conference began in an atmosphere of mutual distrust. Lord Birkenhead, as F. E. Smith, a rising and brilliant lawyer, although not an Ulsterman, had sympathized with

their cause some years before, and because of his then belligerent attitude had been known as "Galloper Smith." Churchill, as Minister for the Colonies, was held largely responsible for the ruthless Black and Tans. Arthur Griffith, small and dark and dour, not very talkative, eyed them with suspicion. Michael Collins, the gay-hearted daredevil, dearly loved a fight and came with a chip on his shoulder. One of his complaints was that Churchill's men had hunted him day and night and put a price upon his head.

Churchill retorted that at least it was a good price, a far better price than the Boers had offered for him. The British government was supposed to have promised $25,000 for the apprehension of Collins. The Minister showed the Irish leader a faded copy of the reward the Boers had offered for Churchill when he escaped from Pretoria. It was a mere $125. That struck the Irishman's sense of humor. There was a general laugh all around which cleared the air. Not so long after, Collins would come bounding like an agile panther up the stairs in his Sloane Street quarters saying to all and sundry that Winston and Freddy and "L. G." were not such bad fellows. The British Government leaders were saying the same

thing about him. When they finally parted, Churchill was conscious that the government would come in for some serious criticism because of the terms they had agreed upon. But Collins, sombre for the moment, said that he probably had written his death warrant. It was a prophecy that came true. He was assassinated by Irish irreconcilables. The agreement the conference came to created an Irish Free State, giving Ulster the right to opt out. The country was to have the status of a self-governing Dominion. The treaty was finally signed on December 6, 1921, the British Parliament ratified it on December 16 and the Irish Dail did so on January 7, 1922.

In 1922 the Conservatives refused to support Lloyd George as Prime Minister any longer. Bonar Law succeeded him and in the general election Churchill, who again ran in Dundee, was badly beaten. In a succeeding election he ran in West Leicester and again was beaten. Asquith helped put into the premiership Ramsay MacDonald, leader of the Labor party. Churchill formally resigned from the Liberal party because of this. In 1924 there was a vacancy in the Abbey division of Westminster, London. Churchill ran as an independent. It was an intensely exciting contest,

watched all the more because it was Churchill's attempt to come back to Parliament as an opponent of the remains of the Liberal party. The regular Conservative candidate beat him by forty-three votes.

During his year or so of enforced absence from Parliament, Churchill worked on a plan he had long had in mind—a history of the great war. The first volume of *The World Crisis* appeared in 1923. The fourth and last was issued in 1929. It was acknowledged a masterpiece. It became a best seller. Incidentally, each volume as it appeared stirred up great controversies because the author did not scruple to attack men in high places who had held star roles in the great conflict.

Ramsay MacDonald could only remain Prime Minister so long as the Liberals in the House of Commons added their votes to those of the Labor party. Late in 1924 the Liberals withdrew their support and MacDonald's first taste of the high office came to an abrupt end. The Conservative party, in the meantime, had welcomed the prodigal son, Churchill, back to the fold, giving him the safe constituency of Epping which has remained constantly true to him, even when he was actively fighting some of the very things the Conservatives

were supporting. No sooner was he elected to his seat than Stanley Baldwin, whose party had had a thumping victory in the nation, gave him the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Churchill came to the place with high hopes and great ambition. It was the goal his father had reached.

Unfortunately for his peace of mind, Churchill had often preached retrenchment and economy when attacking the budgets of other Chancellors. These things were remembered and quoted. Besides, the man who levies the taxes is never a popular hero. Churchill in his long incumbency fathered five budgets. He ran the gauntlet in the House of Commons five times. He restored the gold standard. His 1926 budget underwent only moderate fire. But in 1927 his troubles began. He said the country now had to pay for the damage done by the nation-wide strike in 1926. He claimed the treasury had lost $87,000,000 in taxes directly traceable to the strike and had incurred $72,000,000 extra expenses because of the strike. In a period of exceptional difficulty he had tried his best to guide the country around a difficult corner. He had tried his best to find a way to balance the budget without at the same time checking the long-hoped for business revival. Churchill, in taking the

office, had expressed the hope of saving $50,000,000 a year. He had utterly failed. According to his old friend, Lloyd George, he was the merriest tax collector since Robin Hood. One of his deadliest critics was a shrunken, ill, pale-faced, crippled, little man with ice-blue eyes and rasping voice. He was Philip Snowden, who had been the first Labor Chancellor of the Exchequer in history. Snowden had not reduced the income tax, but he took the burden off the Briton's breakfast table. He cut the duties on tea, coffee and cocoa by half; he took three cents a pound off the sugar duty; he abolished all duties on dried fruits. And at the end of the year he showed a surplus. Churchill took six pence off the income tax.

"Ours was a housewives' budget," growled Snowden. "Yours is a rich man's budget."

It was the first of dozens of encounters between Churchill and Snowden. They delighted in crossing swords.

Churchill had a very bad press. The *London Daily News*, a Liberal party paper, called him a clever conjuror with figures. The *London Nation* accused him of tenderness to the supertax payer. An American correspondent said he was ruining his chances ever to be prime minister and that he

was "a balloon that has been pricked, a kite without a tail, a Tin Lizzie whose engine has blown up."

In his budgets for 1928 and 1929 Churchill was accused of raiding every nest egg that the Treasury held in reserve for emergencies. Snowden called his last budgets "briber's budgets," saying they were obviously framed with an eye to a general election that could not long be delayed. The country was burdened with $1,500,000,000 of fresh debt. Of course, in mitigation, it was said by his friends that the general strike, bad business and necessary increased expenditures by the government made it impossible for the Chancellor to have made a better showing. Nevertheless, the bad budgets played their part in the defeat of the Baldwin government on May 12, 1929.

In 1926 Churchill played a big role on another stage. There had been increasing labor unrest for some years, particularly among the coal miners. They had several times been out on strike. For a period the government had tried to avoid this by subsidizing the coal industry. Now the miners were again on strike. The leaders of all the trades unions in Britain were talking of proclaiming a nation-wide strike in sympathy for the miners. In

the past Baldwin had displayed a velvet hand inside a velvet glove. It suited his easy-going, rather lazy temperament. But this time Baldwin determined to display the iron hand, naked and threatening. He decided it was time for a show-down. The biggest strike in Britain's history was called on May 3. The object was to tie up completely all the nation's life. But the government had been forehanded. Forces of volunteers had been enrolled. Men from the middle and upper classes flocked to the Baldwin banner. They operated the railways, street cars, and buses. They drove lorries which brought milk and fruit and vegetables from the farms. They hauled fish from the docks and meat from the markets. They ran electric light and gas plants. Police were everywhere to see that nobody interfered with the volunteers. It gave Londoners a good laugh when a volunteer bus conductor with a rich Oxford accent asked passengers, "Pahss down the aisle, please!" Just in case there might be trouble, troops were unobtrusively kept in their barracks in London and other big cities. Even light naval vessels anchored in the Thames at London. The only newspaper that appeared daily in its usual form was the *Daily Herald*, the London organ of the Labor party and the trades

union movement. The *Times* printed one small sheet. The other London newspapers, to hold continuity of issue, got out little mimeograph sheets. In this emergency Churchill published the *British Gazette.* He also edited it. He put all the news and all the government proclamations in it. He made of it a militant newspaper that told the strikers they didn't stand a chance. Its circulation ran over 2,000,000. It is a tribute to the British character that no lives were lost. There were no angry clashes between strikers and troops or police. The national strike ended peacefully on May 12 with a complete victory for the government. The miners, however, continued out on strike for some time. What had appealed to the mass of the citizens was the government's plea that if the nation-wide strike had succeeded, it would have meant an overthrow of constitutional government.

In 1929 the country had another national election. Churchill was returned for Epping, but Baldwin went out of power and Ramsay MacDonald came in. It was to be the end of office for Churchill for many long years. He was to be a lone wolf in the political wilderness.

But for him there was neither repining nor idleness. He began writing many books—*My Early*

Life in 1930; *The Eastern Front* in 1931; *Thoughts and Adventures* in 1932. In 1933 he began the many-volumed masterpiece, *The Life of the Duke of Marlborough.* Here, taking advantage of papers opened to him by his kinsmen, he rushed to the defense of his great ancestor and in many cases proved that the first Duke had been maligned. In December, 1931, Churchill went to the United States for a lecture tour. It was postponed for a time because on December 13, while crossing the street to spend the evening at the home of his friend Bernard M. Baruch, America's wartime Chairman of the War Industries Board, he was run into and badly injured by a taxi. When the lecture tour was resumed it was a popular and financial success.

Part III • IN THE WILDERNESS

Chapter Six

THE LONE WOLF

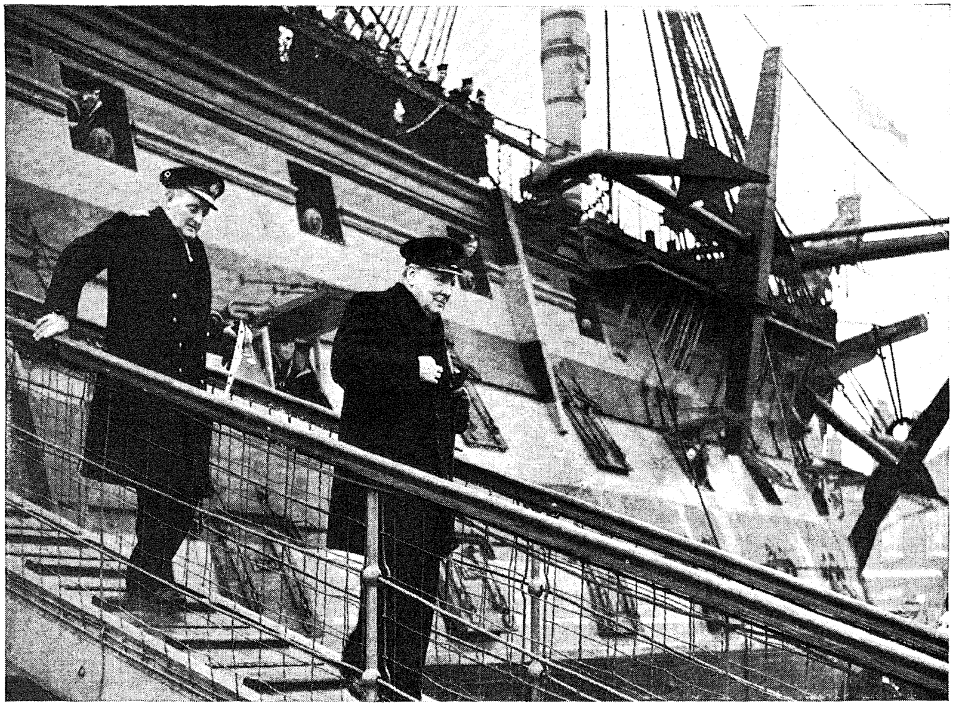
With Ramsay MacDonald in power as Prime Minister once more and with Stanley Baldwin and Churchill often differing widely on matters of policy, all the I-told-you-so's in Britain said the former Chancellor of the Exchequer was a spent force. They called him erratic. They said he lacked judgment. They predicted he never would be prime minister.

Churchill did not bother. His attitude was very much the classic, "They say, let them say."

He himself said it first. In talking to his constituents at Epping he told them:

"I am now getting to be a very old man. Having held great offices of state for nearly a quarter of a century, I can assure you I am quite indifferent as to whether I hold public office again or not."

This was more than mere talk. Year after year from that time on, although he never left the Conservative party, he acted independently of it. He took orders from no one. He spoke as he pleased



Wide World

Britain's hope for the future and a symbol of victory against a former continental aggressor.

Acme

A cap instead of a derby—but smoking the inevitable cigar—Winston Churchill watches a demonstration of anti-aircraft gunnery

and in the House of Commons voted as he pleased. With an ordinary member demeaning himself in that fashion, the Conservative machine, especially the Conservative whips, would have taken stern action. But the stature of Churchill had grown in the country to such a height that he was left undisturbed.

One of the biggest problems tackled in these years when he was a lone wolf was the future government of India. The myriad millions of that great sub-continent, stirred by men like Mahatma Gandhi, were demanding something better than rule from London. But the problem was one of the most complicated it is possible for man to conceive. The population is about 350,000,000, most of the people being illiterate, hopelessly poor and deeply indebted to native usurers. Some 63,000,000 dwell in the native states ruled over by native Indian princes. In India as a whole there is a mighty minority of some 80,000,000 Moslems, mainly fighting races who have stood by the English in their wars and are unwilling to be submerged in and ruled by a Hindu world. Among the Hindus are at least 30,000,000 so-called "untouchables," the depressed classes who are outside of the caste system.

In 1929 a commission, under Sir John Simon, went to India, studied the problem, and favored some measure of autonomy for the provinces of British India. Later, Sir John and Lord Irwin, then Viceroy of India, suggested a three-cornered conference between representatives of the British government, the native princes, and delegates from British India. Lord Irwin, by the way, is the present Lord Halifax, now British Ambassador to the United States. A round-table conference on the subject of India was held in London in 1931. Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald presided over it, King George V opened it. The princes, who rule the native states, surprised everyone by declaring they were willing to come into some kind of federated state. The conference was a gorgeous show while it lasted. The diamonds, rubies, and emeralds of the princes made society women turn green with envy. But the conference ended without a specific agreement having been reached.

In Parliament MacDonald reported that the round table really made marked progress in the future solution of the great problem. Then Churchill attacked. A hostile American correspondent in his report of the session said of the episode:

"Churchill is not a shy violet. He is a sunflower

in the sunlight; a movie star in the calcium light. He proceeded to charge oratorically like a mad bull in the Indian china shop, breaking crockery all over the place. He poked fun at the conference. He flung out at Lord Irwin. Solemnly, almost tearfully, he warned Parliament they were heading a way which would lose India."

A member of the Simon commission, replying, said it was a pity Churchill had not gone with the commission. He might have gotten more in touch with realities. Oliver Stanley, son of Lord Derby, the Conservative demi-god of Lancashire, who sat at the conference as a British delegate, warned Churchill that the movement in India could not be stopped by flamboyant speeches nor by opinions of armchair critics.

"About 150 years ago," said Stanley, "the same kind of people were denying that we would lose America if we did not give the colonists self-government. But we did."

Stanley Baldwin wound up that part of the debate by giving his blessing to the round-table conference. There was a quick sequel. Churchill sent Baldwin a letter resigning from his so-called "shadow cabinet." This was Baldwin's brain trust. It was well-known that from its members he would

choose his cabinet when and if he became prime minister once more.

In 1933 the government issued its famous White Paper which gave an extended sketch of the government's proposal for a new law for the rule of India. A joint select committee of both houses of Parliament was named for the purpose of drawing up a bill embodying the proposals in the White Paper. Before they did so, they were asked to hear all interested parties both in Britain and India. Many delegations came before it. Churchill and his friend Lord Lloyd, an expert on the Near East, were offered places on the committee, but declined. Later Churchill, still fighting, created a sensation when he charged at one of the committee's hearings that the Secretary of State for India and the great Lord Derby himself had tampered with the evidence prepared for the committee by the India section of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce —in other words, evidence by Lancashire men, who were leaders in the cotton textile industry. A committee investigation decided there was no basis for the charge. When the India bill was finally submitted to Parliament, Churchill and his friends in the House of Commons fought it section by section and almost line by line as they had promised. Be-

fore that fight started on December 4, 1934, Churchill tried to put the Conservative Association on record as to drastic amendments to the bill he and his friends proposed. The association represents all the party constituencies. Churchill's move was defeated by 1102 to 390. Baldwin, once more opposing him, said to his fellow Conservative party members:

"Today you have a good chance of keeping India in the empire forever. If you refuse her this opportunity you will inevitably lose India before two generations have passed." This was in reply to Churchill's prediction that if the bill passed Parliament and became law, it might reduce India to the anarchy and misery of China.

When the sections of the bill were considered in the House of Commons, Churchill laid stress on the necessity of leaving the proper defense of India in British hands. He also hammered away at a section which gave India complete tariff autonomy. In the future, if India finally became an all-India federation, an Indian home-rule government, through its finance minister, he said, could lay heavy import duties on cotton goods from Lancashire and ruin the textile business of that section of England. He warned that the native mill owners

of India, with their cheap labor, would certainly make use of that law.

The first big voting test came on February 11, 1935, when the bill was up for its second reading in the House of Commons. MacDonald was Prime Minister, but Baldwin, as Lord President in the cabinet and as leader of the huge Conservative forces, rallied his men for the measure. Churchill, the Conservatives who were of his way of thinking, and members of the Labor party, who also opposed the bill, could only muster 133 votes. The government rallied 404. It was one of the most resounding defeats Churchill has ever had in his long career.

The lengthy battle, which had really started some seven years before, ended on August 2, 1935, when words were pronounced in the old French form in Parliament: "Le Roy le Veult."

It meant the King had affixed his signature to the India bill which had passed both houses of Parliament. The bill looked forward ultimately to a federated India. In the meantime, it provided for complete autonomy in the various provinces of British India. In each there was to be a governor named by the crown, but limited voting lists provided for popular election to provincial parlia-

ments. As in Britain, the leaders of the majority party were to form a cabinet responsible to the local parliament. In the elections which were held under this law, the majority of the provinces were captured by the followers of Gandhi, and his men proceeded to govern.

Churchill had been one of those who had negotiated with Irish leaders and put through Parliament the bill which gave birth to the Irish Free State. Twice after that highly important matters connected with the Irish Free State came up in Parliament. Twice Churchill fought the proposals of the government. Twice he was defeated. Twice as a prophet he pointed out the evil consequences that would ensue if the government persisted. Twice his prophecies came true. The background of the first battle was as follows. In 1926 an imperial conference was held in London, attended by representatives of the British Government and of the self-governing dominions. The British representatives soon perceived that a new spirit was stirring in the people of the dominions. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand had performed magnificent services in the World War. That conflict had given them a new sense of their nationhood. They were no longer willing to be kept in tutelage of any kind

whatsoever. It was then that Lord Balfour made his celebrated statement that the dominions were now equal states with Great Britain and with each other. The conference agreed that the points of law arising out of this declaration should be settled by a commission of experts. The British delegates who took part in this imperial conference were, besides Lord Balfour, Sir Austen Chamberlain, Stanley Baldwin, L. S. Amery and Churchill.

At the imperial conferences of 1929 and 1930 it was agreed that the Balfour declaration should be formally enacted into law by the British Parliament, so that there could be no possible question as to the future status of the dominions. It was recognized that under this law the British Empire would practically cease to exist and that, in its place, would come a British Commonwealth of Nations, tied together by common interests and linked together by common allegiance to the same king. Thus the sovereign of Great Britain would also be King of Canada, King of Australia, and so on.

In conformity with this, a law was duly introduced in the British parliament in 1931 by the national Government. In its preamble, the bill set forth that any alteration of the law touching succession to the throne or of the royal style and titles

would hereafter require the assent of the parliaments of all the dominions as well as of the British parliament. The main points of the bill were as follows:

1. The parliament of Britain ceased to have any power of revision over the legislation of dominion parliaments. In fact, this had been the case for some time, but had never been recognized by the actual passage of legislation confirming it.

2. The statute recognized that a dominion had full powers to make laws having extra-territorial operation. This also had previously been the case, but without formal legislation confirming it. For instance, a number of the dominions had already sent their own diplomatic ministers to the United States and had negotiated various agreements with foreign powers, including the United States.

3. The statute laid it down that, if there was any repugnance between a law of the United Kingdom and of any one of the dominions, that should not make the dominion law void or inoperative.

It was upon this last point that Churchill made his fight. He said if it was adopted, it would surely enable the Irish Dail to abrogate the law by which the Irish Free State was created, cut all connection

with the Empire and forego the oath of allegiance to the king to which Eamon de Valera had always taken exception. Therefore, he proposed an amendment binding the Irish Free State from doing any of the things he outlined.

W. T. Cosgrave, then head of the government of the Irish Free State, quickly replied to this in a speech he made at Limerick. He said his government would continue to defend the treaty made between Ireland and Britain. However, he warned Churchill that he and his friends must not change the treaty from a pledge of freedom to a symbol of Irish inferiority, by establishing this new proposed legal restraint.

Churchill's proposal was vigorously opposed in the House of Commons. His old friend, L. S. Amery, said the only way to carry on was to show complete trust and faith in the Irish Free State. No distrust must be written into law. It would be a very grave error to single out the Irish Free State for such treatment. Stanley Baldwin wound up the debate, saying the only way for co-operation between Britain and the dominions was really to cooperate. They could not show trust in some dominions and distrust in others. If the Irish chose to cut the painter and drift away, no amendment,

such as Churchill had proposed, would prevent them from doing so. He gravely warned Parliament that in passing on this matter, they were not only dealing with the people of the Irish Free State. They must also consider the very real and deep feeling of the large population of Irish blood in Canada and Australia, to say nothing of the effect upon Americans of Irish extraction.

The Churchill proposal was defeated 350 to 50.

Some years later Churchill saw every one of his predictions come true. Cosgrave was succeeded at the head of the government of the Irish Free State by Eamon de Valera. The latter, step by step, broke almost every connection with the United Kingdom. The post of Governor General was no longer recognized. The oath of allegiance to the king was abolished. In 1937 a new constitution became law. By it the Irish Free State became Eire. It also became a republic with a president and a bicameral legislature. In the new war between Britain and Germany declared on September 3, 1939, Eire, unlike Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, took no part. On the other hand, it proclaimed its neutrality.

After de Valera had been at the head of the government of Southern Ireland for some years, it

was decided that the Irish should no longer pay to Britain large sums of money due on the so-called land annuities. These annuities arose out of a scheme by which Irish peasants were enabled to purchase land virtually on the installment plan. When the de Valera government persisted in this matter, the British government retaliated by placing a heavy protective duty on Irish exports to Great Britain. De Valera answered by placing heavy duties on British exports. Thus the quarrel simmered along to the disadvantage of both. Britain needed Irish butter, eggs, and bacon for its breakfast table. Southern Ireland needed British coal and manufactured goods. In January 12, 1938, de Valera and two colleagues came to London to explore the situation with British Government representatives. The final result was a mutual agreement to drop the fight in which each levied tariffs against the other. In addition a bill was to be passed by which—for $50,000,000, to be paid by the Irish—all outstanding financial obligations were to be settled. Furthermore, Britain was to turn over to Eire the ports of Queenstown, Berehaven and Lough Swilly. Under the treaty of 1922 Britain kept these Irish ports and maintained some forces there as a matter of Empire protection.

On May 5, 1938, Churchill made a very powerful speech attacking the surrender of those ports. He revealed an important piece of inside history. In 1922, when he was one of the negotiators of the Irish treaty, he was advised by Admiral Beatty and the staff of the Admiralty, all of whom had served in the World War and could draw important lessons from their experiences in that conflict. The highlight of the Churchill speech was this:

"The Admiralty of those days assured me that without the use of these ports it would be very difficult, perhaps almost impossible, to feed this Island in time of war. Queenstown and Berehaven shelter the flotillas which keep clear the approaches to the Bristol and English Channels, and Lough Swilly is the base from which access to the Mersey and the Clyde is covered. In a war against an enemy possessing a numerous and powerful fleet of submarines these are the essential bases from which the whole operation of hunting submarines and protecting incoming convoys is conducted."

In grave words, he warned that they now proposed to give up those ports for good. They were giving to the Irish Government the right, as well as the power, to forbid British re-entry. Some might say, if the emergency arose, Britain might

retake the ports for use in a desperate emergency. He replied Britain would have no right to do so. To violate Irish neutrality would put Britain out of court in world opinion and especially at a moment when Great Britain might greatly need the good will of the United States in the matters of blockade and supplies. Once more he fought a vain fight. The bill, as proposed by the government, became law April 25, 1938.

Everything Churchill predicted came true. England found herself in 1939 in a war with Germany in which Eire proclaimed neutrality. In 1941 especially, the combined menace of airplane, submarine and raider attacks upon British shipping made the Admiralty wish the Irish ports had never been given up. All hints to Eire that Britain would like to have the use of them in combating the menace to British shipping met with unfavorable response, this despite the fact that a successful blockade of Britain would also seriously interfere with supplies of food and raw materials for Eire.

In 1936 Churchill played an almost lone hand in one of the most dramatic episodes in the history of England. For quite a long time in the early autumn the American newspapers regaled their

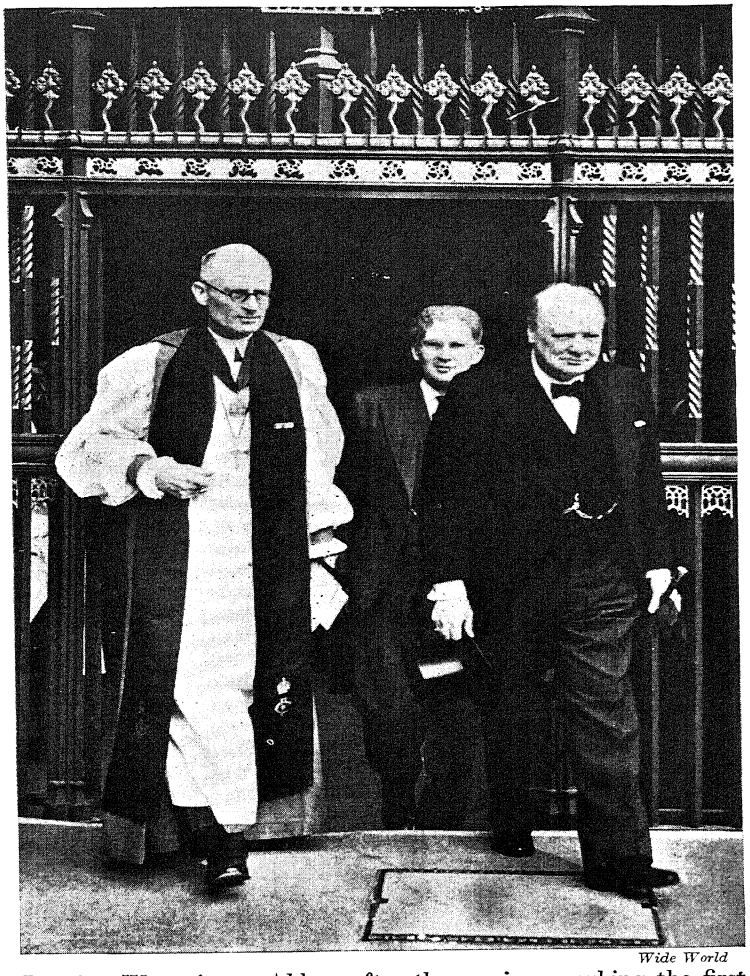
readers with gossip about the growing friendship between Mrs. Ernest Simpson and King Edward VIII. Not only were the stories printed, but also many pictures showing them together on holiday trips. In Great Britain, although the royal family has no real power, nevertheless in many ways it is sacrosanct. The British press played the game. It refrained from any mention of the Simpson affair. It printed no pictures. But all the time the editors were straining at the leash as it were. Here was one of the great news stories of all time and they did not feel free to use it. Then on December 2, 1936, the Bishop of Bradford gave them their chance. He said things which were construed as a direct attack upon the King, his way of life, and the companions with whom he associated. At once the London press, quickly followed by the provincial papers, began printing columns about the King's love affair.

The matter of the King's desire to marry Mrs. Simpson constituted a first class crisis in British and Empire affairs and a world sensation. Prime Minister Baldwin was conferring daily with the King. Other important persons also saw him. The King, in turn, conferred with his mother and brothers. The subject of all these talks was kept

more or less secret. But suddenly the public became aware of the fact that the King had been confronted with this alternative: either give up the idea of marrying Mrs. Simpson or give up the throne.

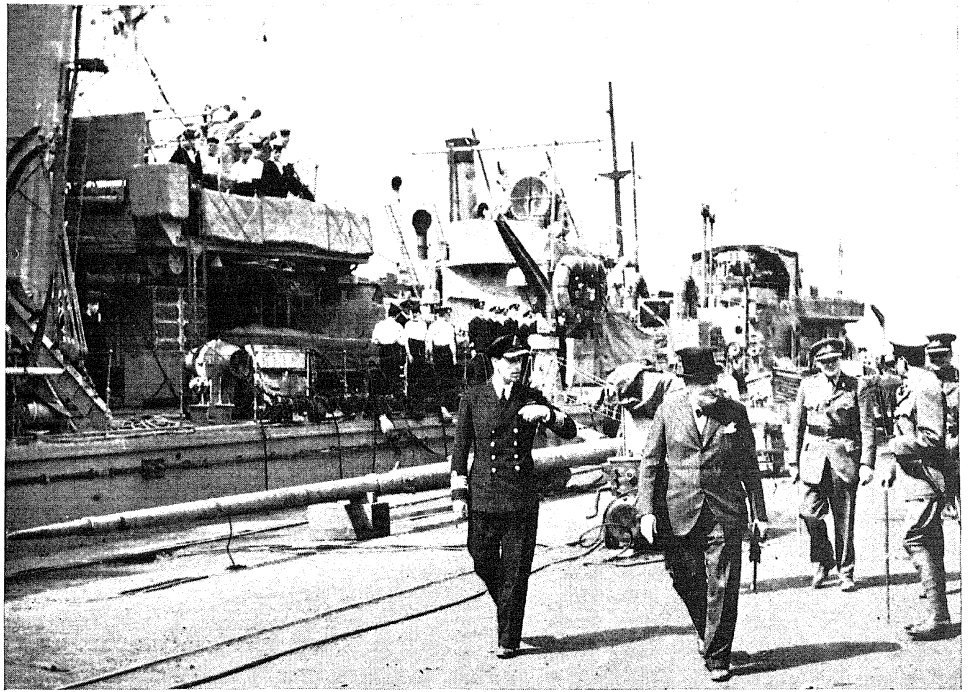
The hounds of publicity and gossip were on the King's tracks. A case was rapidly being built up against him. The bulk of the Conservative members of Parliament prepared to follow the lead of Prime Minister Baldwin. The Labor party also prepared to do so. Most of the clergy were against the marriage. The bulk of the press was against it. The opinion of the dominions was sought and was reported to be thumbs down against the King. One must have lived those days in London to appreciate the character of the crisis. Life seemed to be all centered about what the King would do. People grabbed editions of the papers as fast as they were issued. Nothing else was talked about in the hotels, restaurants, and clubs. There was the same buzz-buzz on the buses and in the underground trains. The belief grew that the very substance of the Empire was involved. It was said to be a constitutional crisis of the gravest character.

Winston Churchill did not follow the huge majority. He was a friend of the King, and he does not



Wide World

Leaving Westminster Abbey after the services marking the first anniversary of the war—during which there was an air-raid. Behind Churchill is his parliamentary secretary, Rt. Hon. Brendan Bracken.



Acme

Watchdogs of Britain's sea lanes—Churchill visits a destroyer squadron. With him is Lord Louis Mountbatten, cousin of King George VI, squadron commander.

desert his friends. He believed that the King was being rushed or bluffed into a decision. On December 5, 1936, Churchill addressed the public in words which began:

"I plead for time and patience. The nation must realize the character of the constitutional issue. There is no question of any conflict between the King and Parliament. Parliament has not been consulted in any way or allowed to express any opinion. The question is whether the King is to abdicate upon the advice of the ministry of the day. No such advice had ever before been tendered a sovereign in past time. . . . No ministry has authority to advise the abdication of the sovereign. . . . The cabinet has no right to prejudice the question without having previously ascertained, at the very least, the will of Parliament. . . . If an abdication were to be hastily extorted, the outrage so committed would cast its shadow forward across many chapters of the history of the British Empire."

Lords Beaverbrook and Rothermere in their papers also opposed any attempt to rush the King into a hasty decision. Then some wild and silly talk went around the clubs. People reverted to the Cromwellian wars when the nation took sides, many remaining faithful to King Charles I and

being known as the "King's men." It was gossiped that Churchill was making himself the leader of the King's men now and was aiming to overthrow the Baldwin cabinet by means of the crisis and to succeed him as prime minister. It was a time when minds were excited, prejudices were strong, and tempers were hot. This was evidenced when Churchill tried to ask a question regarding the affair in the House of Commons on December 7 and was shouted down, the shouts coming from all sides of the chamber. As a matter of fact, Churchill never had any idea of using the crisis to unseat Baldwin. His whole purpose was to shield his royal friend from rush tactics.

On December 10, the King himself settled the matter by deciding to give up the throne. His abdication message was sent to Parliament and the necessary legislation was adopted the next day. In some of his last anxious hours Churchill was one of the few persons the King saw. It has always been believed that Churchill helped him write the message that he broadcast on the night of December 11 before he quickly and secretly left England for temporary exile in France. The language of the broadcast had in it the kind of noble clean-cut English that marks Churchill's prose at its

highest and best. On that same December 11 Churchill had his say in the House of Commons. Now that the King had abdicated, they were willing to listen. There were no menacing howls. There were no loud objections. There was absolute silence during the entire speech, which was also one of his shortest. Churchill said there had never been any constitutional issue between the King and his ministers nor between the King and Parliament. No sovereign, he asserted, had ever conformed more faithfully to the letter and spirit of the constitution than King Edward. Then —

"What is done is done. What has been done or left undone belongs to history and as history, as far as I am concerned, it shall be left."

Thus, so far as he was concerned, the chapter was closed on a note of dignity with no apology and without regrets.

Chapter Seven

IN JEREMIAH'S ROLE

In the course of the years, when Churchill held no office and was merely a backbencher in the House of Commons, it was usual to call him a Cassandra when he vainly tried to arouse his countrymen to the dangers that beset Europe. It would be more fitting to call him a modern British Jeremiah. Time and again, both in the House of Commons and outside, he wrapped his prophetic robes about him and proceeded to read the troubled future. His prophecies in many cases had an uncanny habit of coming true. His son, Randolph, aside from his filial pride in his celebrated father, was fully justified in collecting in book form many of the speeches made in the troubled years before Hitler plunged Europe into another vast and destructive war. *Hansard*—that British equivalent of the American *Congressional Record*—is the tomb of many speeches. Most of them deserve to remain there. But Churchill's were well worth resurrection. They were eloquent. They were always in-

teresting. They foretold in straight words what was to come.

The years in which those speeches were delivered have been called "the years the locust hath eaten." They were the years in which Germany began steadily arming. They were the years in which England failed to arm. England believed the Versailles Treaty had assured an era of peace. England wanted "business as usual." England was beguiled by the dreams of Ramsay MacDonald, who believed in the League of Nations and in disarmament conferences. England ate the lotus with the somewhat lazy and easily satisfied Stanley Baldwin. Later England was to be paralyzed by Neville Chamberlain and his vain efforts at appeasement. The "best people" believed in appeasement. They also had a sneaking admiration for Hitler. He put the working men and the socialists and the fellows who talked democracy into their proper places.

Early in the thirties of the present century the dangers in the world became manifest and Churchill tried to arouse his countrymen. In the Far East Japan seized Mukden in 1931 and in February, 1932 proclaimed the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo. Secretary of State Stimson

tried to get some joint action by Britain and America, but received no encouragement. It was the beginning of Japan's ruthless campaign to achieve hegemony in Asia. It was the birthday of "Asia for the Asiatics"—meaning the Japanese—and of the Asiatic Monroe Doctrine.

Those were the days when Ramsay MacDonald, as Prime Minister, returned empty-handed from League of Nations sessions at Geneva and disarmament conferences at Lausanne, but satisfied that he had made resounding good speeches to the assembled statesmen of Europe. German reparations were practically abandoned and German claims to rearm were being heard. In the meantime, almost every one of the frequent national elections in Germany showed the rising of the tide for National Socialism, a dangerous element whose menace Churchill was quick to recognize.

Speaking in the House of Commons on November 23, 1932, he said: "The demand is that Germany should be allowed to rearm. Do not let His Majesty's Government believe that all that Germany is asking for is equal status. I believe the refined term now is equal qualitative status, or, as an alternative, equal quantitative status by indefinitely deferred stages. That is not what Ger-

many is seeking. All these bands of sturdy Teutonic youths, marching through the streets and roads of Germany, with the light of desire in their eyes to suffer for their Fatherland, are not looking for status. They are looking for weapons, and, when they have the weapons, believe me they will then ask for the return of lost territories and lost colonies, and when that demand is made it cannot fail to shake and possibly shatter to their foundations every one of the countries I have mentioned."

Events marched steadily on to catastrophe. In February, 1933, the League of Nations had adopted a report on the Manchurian situation declaring Japan the aggressor. The Japanese went ahead with their conquest. On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. In March, 1933 Ramsay MacDonald had another satisfying hour, submitting draft proposals to another disarmament conference at Geneva. At home in the House of Commons Churchill said the Prime Minister's intervention in foreign policies had made Britain weaker, poorer, and more defenseless. Referring to MacDonald and Sir John Simon, Churchill had the house laughing when he said:

"We have got our modern Don Quixote home

again, with Sancho Panza at his tail, bearing with them these somewhat dubious trophies which they have collected amid the nervous titterings of Europe."

In March, 1933, Japan resigned from the League of Nations and Hitler gave the first sign of his permanent anti-Semitic fury and policy by decreeing April 1 as Jewish boycott day. In June there was begun in London a world economic conference which was virtually dead before it began. On July 27 it wound up, having accomplished nothing. In October Germany left the disarmament conference Britain's government so dearly loved and also resigned from the League of Nations.

Churchill's old friend, Lloyd George, had made a speech in the House of Commons in which he sought to allay the fears people entertained regarding Nazi Germany.

Up spoke Churchill:

"He represented that Germany might have a few thousand more rifles than was allowed by Treaty, a few more Boy Scouts, and then he pictured the enormous armies of Czechoslovakia and Poland and France, with their thousands of cannon, and so forth. If I could believe that picture I should feel much comforted, but I cannot. I find

it difficult to believe it in view of the obvious fear which holds all the nations who are neighbors of Germany and the obvious lack of fear which appears in the behavior of the German people. The great dominant fact is that Germany has already begun to rearm. We read of importations quite out of the ordinary of scrap iron and nickel and war metals. We read of the military spirit which is rife throughout the country; we see the philosophy of blood lust that is being inculcated into their youth in a manner unparalleled since the days of barbarism."

Those words were spoken in November, 1933, long before Hitler publicly challenged the powers by admitting that Germany was rearming. Jeremiah Churchill told his country what was coming.

November 12, 1933, Hitler held one of his famous "elections," in which only his list of Reichstag candidates could be voted on. It was announced the Nazi candidates polled 95 per cent of the votes cast. Churchill did not fail to see what it meant. When he urged that Britain should also begin arming, he said:

"Germany is ruled by a handful of autocrats who are the absolute masters of that gifted nation. They are men who have neither the long interests

of a dynasty to consider, nor those very important restraints which a democratic Parliament and constitutional system impose upon any executive Government. Nor have they the restraint of public opinion, which public opinion, indeed, they control by every means which modern apparatus renders possible. . . . I am not going to speak about their personalities, because there is no one in the House who is not thoroughly aware of them and cannot form his own opinion after having read the accounts of what has been happening there, of the spirit which is alive there and of the language, methods and outlook of the leading men of that tremendous community, much the most powerful in the whole world. The German power is in their hands, and they can direct it this way or that by a stroke of a pen, by a single gesture."

On June 30, 1934, occurred the famous purge, dozens of Hitler's old associates being murdered in cold blood by his orders. In August President Hindenburg died and Hitler named himself "Leader" and Chancellor of the Third Reich. On January 13, 1935, a plebiscite was held in the Saar and nine-tenths of those taking part voted to return to Germany. It was Hitler's first big territorial gain. He had persuaded the Allies to allow the plebiscite

some years before the Versailles Treaty had fixed it. On March 16 he defied England and France by proclaiming that he was going to introduce conscription and by announcing a big army. Both these things were violations of the Versailles Treaty. Sir John Simon, then Foreign Minister of Great Britain, went to Berlin to see Hitler. He came back empty-handed. Hitler refused to withdraw the conscription order and would not give a guarantee to keep hands off Austria. Already Churchill was sounding the note, which was to toll the knell for the democracies—"Too late! Too late!"

On May 2, 1935, commenting in the House of Commons upon Hitler's definite declarations to Sir John Simon, Churchill said:

"When the situation was manageable, it was neglected, and now that it is thoroughly out of hand we apply too late the remedies which might have effected a cure. There is nothing new in the story. It is as old as the Sybilline Books. It falls into that long, dismal catalogue of the fruitlessness of experience and the confirmed unteachability of mankind. Want of foresight, unwillingness to act when action would be simple and effective, lack of clear thinking, confusion of counsel until the emergency comes, until self-preservation strikes

its jarring gong—these are the features which constitute the endless repetion of history."

On May 21, 1935, Hitler made a speech to the Reichstag. This speech deserves a place in history because it puts on record the Hitler promises then made which were later callously broken at his own convenience. He began by announcing that Germany would not return to the League of Nations until it could have real equality of status. His country had broken away from those articles of the Versailles Treaty that discriminated against it. As to other articles, Germany would rely upon peaceful understandings. It was ready to accept limitation of armaments if equally accepted by other powers. He went further, saying the prohibition of bombing outside the battle zone could be extended to the outlawry of all bombing. He asserted Germany neither intended nor wished to interfere in the affairs of Austria, to annex that country nor to conclude an Anschluss. He reiterated Germany's desire for peace. But he dropped one sinister remark. He said Germany could not easily observe the sanctity of the demilitarized Rhine zone when, on the other side of the frontier, France was constantly strengthening its defense.

The very next day Churchill warned the government that, while Hitler talked of having an army of "only" 550,000 men, that only meant men retained in barracks. It took no account of the big numbers of new recruits trained each year, which would enable Germany to mobilize 3,000,000 men with ease.

On June 2, 1935, that bird of evil omen, Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop, arrived in London as Hitler's special commissioner to discuss disarmament matters. He had a bill of goods to sell to the cabinet for his master. It was nothing less than an agreement between Germany and Britain regarding naval strength. In the meantime, on June 8, there occurred an exchange of places in the reconstruction of the government. Baldwin, who had been Lord President, became Prime Minister. MacDonald, who had been Prime Minister, became Lord President. Sir Samuel Hoare, a well-known appeaser, became Secretary for Foreign Affairs in place of Sir John Simon. On June 18 this extraordinary government, which had spoken so much about the sanctity of treaties, signed a naval agreement with Germany which broke the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. It was a bilateral change, in which England's ally, France, was not

consulted and France's interests in the matter were apparently not considered. The Treaty of Versailles had limited the navy Germany could have. She was to have no submarines. She was to have no war vessels with a tonnage above ten thousand. But what Ribbentrop got for his country was an agreement that Germany should have a tonnage equal to 35 percent of Britain's except for submarines. As to these, Germany was to have 45 percent of what Britain possessed. In certain circumstances Germany might have 100 percent, but was to consult Britain first. Germany's violations of the Treaty of Versailles, which were known to naval experts, were thus accepted and regularized. This queer cabinet thus gave to Britain's potential enemy and naval rival a possibility of equalling her in submarines, the craft which nearly brought England to her knees in the World War and whose abolition British statesmen had been advocating. The agreement created a sensation in France. The French government looked upon it as an affront to them and as an error on Britain's part that it would live to regret.

In the House of Commons on July 22 Churchill had his say on the matter. He ridiculed a previous

offer Germany had made to abolish the submarine providing all other countries did. The Germans, he said, well knew such unanimity was in no danger of being attained. He also expressed his surprise that anyone in the government should be naive enough to believe that Germany really meant to subscribe to any agreement to restrict the use of the submarine against commerce so as to strip it of inhumanity. He came right to the heart of the matter in these words:

"If we are to assume, as we must for the purpose of this discussion, the ugly hypothesis of a war in which Britain and Germany would be on opposite sides and the British blockade would be enforced on the coast of Germany, as it was in the last War, who in his senses would believe that the Germans, possessed of a great fleet of submarines and watching their women and children being starved by the British blockade, would abstain from the fullest use of that arm? Such a view seems to be the acme of gullibility."

What backbencher Churchill foresaw in 1936, Prime Minister Churchill saw take place in the spring of 1941, when submarines, aided by dive bombers and surface raiders, were sinking British ships faster than Britain could build or buy ships.

In 1935 he expressed his fear of what Germany might do in the way of building up a great fleet. People had thought Germany was merely building 10,000-ton pocket-battleships. It was now revealed that she had laid the keels for 26,000-ton ships and the British Navy's intelligence department seemingly knew nothing about it until after the Anglo-German naval treaty was signed. After the World War the British fleet, he said, had great mobility, but that would pass away if the Germans built up a formidable fleet. The great naval base at Singapore, upon which a battle fleet could be based, had for its purpose the protection of Australia, New Zealand and the Indian Ocean. A strong German fleet would mean the greater part of the British Navy would have to be kept near Britain. What backbencher Churchill said then, Prime Minister Churchill saw come to pass in 1940-41. The British fleet, in the main, had to stay in the North Sea, the English Channel, and the Mediterranean. It had to be ready to fight off an invasion of Great Britain. It had to try to convoy merchant vessels. It had to protect troopships and supply ships in the Mediterranean. The Pacific Ocean was left poorly defended. Japan, now a

member of the Axis, was in a position to make trouble for England and the Dutch East Indies.

In 1935, encouraged by what Hitler had obtained from Britain, Mussolini began to dream of empire in North Africa. On the pretext that the Abyssinians had taken wells that really belonged to Italy, he began making demands upon Abyssinia to which no self-respecting government could accede. On June 25, 1935, the British Government offered a strip of British Somaliland to Mussolini. In return he was to modify his demands for Abyssinian territory. This offer was rejected. But the appeasement plan thus started was not dropped. At least, not by Sir Samuel Hoare, the Foreign Secretary. On the evening of October 3 Mussolini delivered one of his thumping speeches to a carefully shepherded mass of shouting Fascists in the Piazza Venezia in Rome. The next day Italy started war on Abyssinia. Mild sanctions were adopted against Italy by the League of Nations, largely under the lead of England's delegates. But, in the meantime Hoare had agreed with Mussolini's French friend, Pierre Laval, then Premier of France, upon another appeasement plan. It was a scheme to partition Abyssinia between Italy and the Abyssinian government. The British cabinet

approved the plan, but on December 9 such a storm of disapproval arose all over the country that Prime Minister Baldwin beat a hasty retreat. Hoare became the sacrificial goat and lost his post, which was given to Anthony Eden.

On October 24, 1935, Churchill gave the country a warning about something more dangerous than the Ethiopian war. Speaking in the House of Commons, he said Mussolini would not have embarked upon this war but for the knowledge that France was profoundly preoccupied by Germany's enormous armament progress and the real or supposed military and naval weakness of Great Britain. Reverting now to Germany, he said:

"The incredible figure of £800,000,000 sterling [about four billion dollars] is being spent in the currency of the present year on direct and indirect military preparations by Germany. The whole of Germany is an armed camp. The industries of Germany are mobilized for war to an extent to which ours were not mobilized even a year after the Great War had begun. The whole population is being trained from childhood up to war. A mighty army is coming into being. Many submarines are exercising in the Baltic. Great cannon, tanks, machine-guns and poison gas are fast accu-

mulating. The German air force is developing at great speed."

On March 7, 1936, Hitler again presented himself as the arch breaker of treaties. He sent troops into the Rhineland in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles and of England and France. He denounced the Treaty of Versailles. With tongue in cheek, he assured the British and French the occupation of the Rhineland was "merely symbolic." At the same time his ambassador to Britain handed Foreign Secretary Eden another one of his fair sounding proposals—papers which never came to fruition and probably were not expected to. This one talked of a twenty-five year non-aggression pact between Germany, France, Belgium and possibly, Holland, with Great Britain and Italy as guarantors, an air pact, and Germany's return to the League of Nations.

On March 10, 1936, England's Jeremiah wrapped his prophetic robes about him and told a skeptical House of Commons or, at least, one that was doing a powerful lot of wishful thinking:

"The fact that Germany is spending at this enormous rate upon armaments warns us not only of the magnitude of the danger, but possibly of its imminence. Expenditure on armaments means

wages. The weekly livelihood for a very large proportion of the German people has now become dependent upon military preparations. Several millions of people in Germany who were unemployed have found employment in munitions manufacture or in the armed forces. On the other hand, the whole is supported by borrowed money on a large scale, and the financial situation has become such that this cannot go on indefinitely. It cannot go on, but how can it stop? A terrible dilemma lies ahead of the Government in Germany. If they go on, there is bankruptcy; if they stop, there is tremendous unemployment. There is no chance of Germany finding additional substitute employment by trading with tropical colonies, or by peaceful conquest of our markets or those of other nations, which would in the immediate future in the slightest degree compensate for the curtailment of the vast munitions program on which the whole of Germany is now engaged. The German Government will have to choose at no distant date between an internal and an external catastrophe. Can we doubt what course the man at the head of Germany would be likely to choose?"

It must not be supposed that Churchill was a Jeremiah crying in a real wilderness. Whenever

the word went forth in the lobbies—"Winston is up"—the benches of the House of Commons rapidly filled. He had their ears, but not their votes. They listened closely to what he said and then voted the way the whips told them to. The vain dreamer MacDonald, the indolent Baldwin, the timorous Chamberlain, these were the leaders the House of Commons followed in the fatal years when the so-called National Governments were functioning. There was a sort of sleeping sickness assailing the government, the Parliament, and most of the press. This naturally communicated itself to the voting public. There was an unwillingness to believe in very real danger. There was a vexation at facing facts. But Churchill kept on indefatigably. He begged the government to prepare against eventualities. In his graphic way he gave a description of a situation which tells what America has experienced in the spring of 1941 and that this own country was to experience in the summer of 1939:

"Here in a nutshell is the history of munitions production: first year, very little; second year, not much, but something; third year, almost all you want; fourth year, more than you need. We are only at the beginning of the second year, whereas

Germany is already, in many respects, at the end of the third."

On March 18, 1936, Ribbentrop came to London to attend a meeting of the League Council. The mountain labored and on March 20 brought forth a mighty small mouse—merely a white paper inviting Germany, among other things, to submit her arguments showing that the Franco-Soviet pact was a danger to her and asking her not to increase her troops in the reoccupied Rhineland. Things got to such a state that on April 15 the general staffs of Britain, France, and Belgium met in London to draw up plans for co-operation in case Germany made an unprovoked attack upon France or Belgium.

And what did Churchill think of all these things? He told the nation through his speeches in March and April of 1936. Almost alone among those who spoke, he told the people that Hitler's appetite grew upon what it fed. He was not deceived by specious and lying pledges nor by pacts that Hitler signed and that he called irrevocable. Said Jeremiah:

"One year it is the Saar, another month the right to have conscription, another month to gain from Britain the right to build submarines, another month the Rhineland. What will it be next?

Austria, Memel, other territories and disturbed areas, are already in view."

The opinion of the optimists was that with Britain's mighty navy and France's great army, plus the far-famed Maginot line, Hitler would hesitate before starting any war in the West. Churchill, ever-gloomy in those critical years, told them:

"Do not doubt that the whole of the German frontier opposite to France is to be fortified as strongly and as speedily as possible. Three, four or six months will certainly see a barrier of enormous strength. What will be the diplomatic and strategical consequence of that? I am not dealing with the technical aspect, but with the diplomatic reactions. The creation of a line of forts opposite to the French frontier will enable the German troops to be economized on that line, and will enable the main forces to swing round through Belgium and Holland. . . . I thought that Prime Minister Baldwin's remark which he made some years ago about our frontier being on the Rhine was liable at the time to be misunderstood; but if he meant that it was a mortal danger to Britain to have the Low Countries in the fortified grip of the strongest military power upon the Continent, and now, in

these days, to have all the German aviation bases established there, he was only repeating the lesson taught in four centuries of history. That danger will be brought definitely and sensibly nearer from the moment that this new line of German fortifications is completed. But then, look East. There the consequences of the Rhineland fortification may be more immediate. That is to us a less direct danger, but is a more imminent danger. The moment these fortifications are completed, and in proportion as they are completed, the whole aspect of middle Europe is changed. The Baltic States, Poland and Czechoslovakia, with which must be associated Yugoslavia, Roumania, Austria and some other countries, are all affected very decisively."

It is worth noting that the date of this prophecy was April 6, 1936. Nearly two years later in March, 1938, Hitler grabbed Austria. In September, 1938, began the first stages of the grab which was ultimately to take all of Czechoslovakia. In September, 1939, began Hitler's war on Poland, which resulted in that country being divided between Germany and Russia, and Russia's overlordship of the Baltic States. In May, 1940, as Churchill had predicted, the German armies swung

around through Belgium and Holland, decisively defeating the French, who sued for peace on June 21. On July 1, 1940, the Roumanian government renounced the British guarantee of its territorial integrity and in November, a puppet state, signed a pact which added her to the Axis, opened her territory to German troops and guaranteed all Roumanian oil for the Axis. In the spring of 1941 Bulgaria also become a puppet state, allowing German troops passage and German armies smashed Yugoslavia and Greece.

Thus in full and bitter measure were the prophecies of Churchill made realities.

Perhaps one of the bravest acts of Churchill's entire career was his attitude on the shameful business of the partition of Czechoslovakia. In the summer of 1938 Hitler's muzzled press began an intensive campaign against the neighbor country. Lying reports were printed in the Nazi papers, telling how the German residents of the Sudetenland were being persecuted by the Czech authorities. It was another case in which Hitler charged that the lamb was viciously attacking the wolf. In August the appeasing Chamberlain government sent Lord Runciman to Prague to "explore" the situation and as mediator to try to bring about

some agreement that would satisfy Hitler. In the meantime, the latter called forth his armies and held maneuvers with unprecedented numbers of soldiers. He showed all the panoply of the vast war machine he had built, including tanks and squadron after squadron of airplanes. President Benes of Czechoslovakia said he was willing to give the Sudetenland a large measure of autonomy. This offer was contemptuously rejected by Hitler. In a violent speech at Nuremberg he declared he was going to end the "oppression" of Germans in the Sudetenland once and for all.

On September 15, Prime Minister Chamberlain, for the first time in his life, flew in an airplane. He was in haste to get to Berchtesgaden to see Hitler about the Czech crisis. Upon his return, he conferred with Premier Daladier of France. They agreed the best way to save European peace was for Czechoslovakia to cede the Sudetenland to Germany. This decision was conveyed to President Benes. The Czech cabinet, finding that Britain and France were unwilling to take a strong stand against Hitler, accepted the terms, virtually under duress. Once more Chamberlain flew on a pilgrimage to Germany, this time to Godesberg. September 24 he returned to London

a deeply disappointed man. Hitler, seeing he was winning, had increased his demands. He not only wanted the Sudetenland districts he had previously demanded, but had produced a map showing some doubtful outlying portions of territory that he wanted, too. Instead of delaying German occupation, he wanted his troops to march in on October 1. After the Germans occupied territory that was not certainly German in its majority, Hitler said he would agree to a plebiscite to be held not later than November. He also demanded the liberation of all German prisoners held by Czechoslovakia and the release of Sudeten Germans from the Czech army.

On September 26 event followed on the heels of event. President Roosevelt sent an appeal to Hitler and Benes, asking them to settle their affairs by negotiation. It had been announced that Hitler would speak. He had the whole world for an audience, because it was believed this speech would be one of his most warlike utterances. Instead, it was comparatively mild. He demanded the immediate occupation of the Sudetenland by his troops. Then he largely abated world fears of war by saying that when he got the Sudetenland it would be the last territorial demand he would make as far as

Europe was concerned. Of course events since then have shown him to be the greatest liar since Ananias, but at the time all the world was anxious to believe him. If he was sincere, it meant a prospect of peace for troubled Europe. On the same day Chamberlain spoke, pledging aid to Czechoslovakia if attacked, but at the same time guaranteeing the Sudetenland to Germany. On September 27 President Roosevelt sent a cable to Hitler. The President termed a resort to force in the Sudeten matter as "unjustifiable." In the meantime, Chamberlain and Roosevelt both appealed to Mussolini to use his good offices with Hitler, for things looked bad again. The Czech army had mobilized. On September 28 the British fleet was ordered to mobilize. All hope for peace seemed vain. In London people grabbed the newspapers from the vendors as edition after edition came out. Millions listened in on the radio for the latest bulletins. Chamberlain arose in the House of Commons to explain the situation. He had been watched by a big crowd when he left his house at 10 Downing Street. He was watched by another throng in front of the Parliament buildings. Then came a stroke of real melodrama. As he was speaking, all hope of peace seemingly gone, Sir John Simon

nudged him and handed him a telegram. The telegram was an invitation from Hitler to visit Munich. Daladier and Mussolini were also to be present. On September 30 it was announced that the four negotiators had reached a four-power accord. The Czechs were to evacuate their army and their officers from Sudetenland on October 1. Britain, France and Italy guaranteed that the evacuation would be completed by October 10. The occupation of territory predominantly German would be started by German troops in four stages, beginning October 1. An international commission named by Britain, France, Italy and Czechoslovakia would decide when a plebiscite was to be held in the doubtful territory and would also preside over the fixing of the final frontiers between Germany and Czechoslovakia. France and Britain would guarantee the new frontiers. The Czech government sorrowfully bowed to what was practically an ultimatum agreed upon by its presumed friends and the news was broadcast to the nation at five in the afternoon.

On October 1 Chamberlain returned to England, landing at Heston Airport in the suburbs of London. A vast throng was there to greet him. In the immense relief from the threat of immediate war,

the British people deeply rejoiced. For the first time in his political career, the man with the umbrella, the man with the cold, flat voice, hard dark eyes, prominent teeth, sagging moustache and unengaging speech, found himself a popular hero. Even the umbrella seemed an object of the crowd's affection. Moved by their cheers, Chamberlain broke into an icy smile and waved a piece of paper, saying to them he had brought them "peace in our time" and "peace with honor." The paper he so proudly displayed had been signed the night before by Hitler and himself. Chamberlain had requested it. Hitler willingly consented. He had gotten what he wanted. He was not averse to signing a scrap of paper if the old gentleman wanted it. It really pledged Hitler to nothing. Here is what it said:

"We regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German naval agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again."

Chamberlain went his triumphant way to Buckingham Palace to give the King a firsthand narrative of what had occurred at Munich. In all great national crises it is a habit of loyal Londoners to flock to the space before the palace. They did so this time. In response to loud calls, King George

and Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by the now beaming Chamberlain and his wife, appeared on the balcony several times and waved to the crowd.

For the Prime Minister there was only one jarring note to mar the day's triumph. Alfred Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty, resigned his cabinet post. In his letter of resignation Cooper said he knew he was striking a discordant note, but he felt he must resign an office he loved as a protest against the settlement at Munich. "I profoundly distrust the foreign policy which this government is pursuing and seems likely to continue to pursue," he wrote.

But the Prime Minister got consolation from his King and from the head of the Church. On October 2, King George did the unprecedented thing of issuing a message praising the work of a prime minister. Said he:

"The time for anxiety is past and we have been able today to offer our thanks to the Almighty for His mercy in sparing us the horrors of war. . . . After the magnificent efforts of the Prime Minister in the cause of peace, it is my personal hope that a new era of friendship and prosperity may be dawning among the peoples of the world."

The Archbishop of Canterbury in a radio address to the nation said, "Whatever our politics may be, the hearts of all of us are full of gratitude to Mr. Chamberlain."

But by October 3 the nation, and particularly some of its representatives in the House of Commons, were beginning to have second and cooler thoughts. Chamberlain made a speech about the settlement. He paid tribute to the restraint and dignity of the Czech government and people.

"Shame!" cried the Labor members in chorus.

"I have nothing to be ashamed of," snapped the Prime Minister. "Let those who have, hang their heads."

Duff Cooper said he had tried hard to swallow the Munich terms, but they stuck in his throat. He revealed inside information when he said they were always being told they must not irritate Hitler, particularly when he was about to make a speech, because then he was apt to say terrible things, from which there would be no means of retreating afterwards.

On October 5 the benches at the House of Commons were filled. The great backbencher, Churchill himself, was to speak. He began by saying this was not a time when it was worth anyone's

while to court political popularity. The members leaned forward in their seats. They expected high explosives. They were not disappointed. Said Churchill slowly and measuredly:

"I will begin by saying the most unpopular and most unwelcome thing. I will begin by saying what everybody would like to ignore or forget but which must nevertheless be stated, namely, that we have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat, and that France has suffered even more than we have. The utmost the Prime Minister has been able to secure by all his immense exertions, by all the great efforts and mobilization which took place in this country, and by all the anguish and strain through which we have passed in this country—the utmost he has been able to gain for Czechoslovakia in the matters which were in dispute has been that the German dictator, instead of snatching the victuals from the table, has been content to have them served to him course by course.

"The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was the first time Herr Hitler had been made to retract in any degree. We really must not waste time after all this long debate upon the difference between the positions reached at Berchtesgaden, at Godesberg and at Munich. They can be very sim-

ply epitomized, if the House will permit me to vary the metaphor. One pound was demanded at the pistol's point. When it was given, two pounds were demanded at the pistol's point. Finally the dictator consented to take one pound, seventeen shillings and six pence, and the rest in promises of good will for the future."

He shook his massive head as if puzzled and confessed he could not understand why there should have been so much fuss and so much talk about crisis if the representatives of Britain and France were ready all along to sacrifice Czechoslovakia. The Czechs could probably, by acting alone, have gotten much better terms.

Then the old Jeremiah in him moved the speaker once again. The prophet spoke:

"At any moment there may be an order for Herr Goebbels to start again his propaganda of calumny and lies; at any moment an incident may be provoked, and now that the fortress line is turned, what is there to stop the will of the conqueror. . . . I venture to think that in the future the Czechoslovak State cannot be maintained as an independent entity. I think you will find that in a period of time which may be measured by years, but may be measured only by months,

Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime."

As a matter of fact in the following March Hitler sent his troops into the rest of Czechoslovakia. He "protected" Bohemia and Moravia.

Churchill put the blame where it belonged:

"It is the most grievous consequence of what we have done and what we have left undone in the last five years—five years of futile good intentions, five years of eager search for the line of least resistance, five years of uninterrupted retreat of British power. . . . When I think of the fair hopes of a long peace which still lay before Europe at the beginning of 1933 when Herr Hitler first obtained power, and of all the opportunities of arresting the growth of Nazi power which have been thrown away, when I think of the immense combinations and resources which have been squandered or neglected, I cannot believe that a parallel exists in the whole course if history. So far as this country is concerned, the responsibility must rest with those who have had the undisputed control of our political affairs."

He compared Britain's position to the difference between the strong power England had long ago under King Alfred and the weakness it suffered

under King Ethelred the Unready. And he quoted to the crowded benches the rugged words of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* so apposite to the day in which he was speaking:

" 'All these calamities fell upon us because of evil counsel, because tribute was not offered to them at the right time nor yet were they resisted; but when they had done the most evil, then was peace made with them.' "

There were in his audience many who optimistically believed Chamberlain had really obtained peace in our time. To them the old prophet said:

"We are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude which has befallen Great Britain and France. Do not let us blind ourselves to that. It must now be accepted that all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will make the best terms they can with the triumphant Nazi power. The system of alliances in Central Europe upon which France has relied for her safety has been swept away, and I can see no means by which it can be reconstituted. The road down the Danube Valley to the Black Sea, the road which leads as far as Turkey, has been opened."

A little over two years after that was said, Hitler's troops had occupied most of that road.

Jeremiahs are not popular. Their words are not soothing syrup. They have a bitter savor. Hence it is not surprising that Churchill did not carry the House with him. On October 6 there was a vote on a resolution "that this House approves the policy of His Majesty's Government by which the war was averted and supports their efforts to secure a lasting peace." It was adopted by 366 to 144. Among those who voted in the negative with Churchill were Anthony Eden, L. S. Amery, and Duff Cooper, good Tories all. They were destined to have places in the cabinet when Churchill became Prime Minister.

For a period after that, Churchill spent more time at home. His attendance at the House of Commons was infrequent. But when in March 19, 1939, the estimates for the navy were introduced he was back in his place. He made a fervent plea for many new destroyers, especially as they had been officially informed that Germany was going to build up to one hundred percent parity with Britain in submarine tonnage. He said a very shrewd guess could be made that much of this new tonnage had already been built in sections and all that was necessary now was to put them together. The prophet, usually so accurate in his predictions, made one

bad mistake. He said they had the measure of submarines. At that time he did not foresee what the Germans were to practice in the spring of 1941—a deadly combination of submarines working with bombers, each signaling the prey to the other.

Ominous events were occurring on the Continent. Roumania signed a trade agreement with Germany which gave the latter much Roumanian grain and oil. Franco was well on the way to complete victory in Spain and felt he owed much of his success to German and Italian help in men, munitions, and airplanes. Italy invaded Albania and conquered the country in a few days. Poland was alarmed by a sudden German press campaign along the well-known Hitler model—that is, that Germans were being persecuted by the Poles. The German press also demanded the annexation of Danzig. Britain gave Poland a guarantee against aggression. This was followed up a little later by similar guarantees to Roumania and Greece. President Roosevelt appealed to Mussolini and Hitler to pledge themselves to keep the peace for ten years. Two weeks later, on April 28, Hitler did not reply by message to the President, but, addressing his puppet Reichstag, treated the President's missive lightly and alarmed the world by

his unilateral denunciation of the Anglo-German naval treaty and the non-aggression ten-year pact he had signed several years before with Poland. Still further trying to guard against eventualities, an Anglo-Turkish pact was signed.

Brooding in his country home, Churchill spelled out the dangers to peace that the Italian grab of Albania indicated. So, in his next speech in the House of Commons, on April 13, 1939, he made an exact diagnosis of the peril to the Balkan nations:

"The four Balkan States and Turkey are an immense combination. If they stand together, they are safe. They have only to stand together to be safe. They will save their populations from the horrors of another war and, by their massive stabilizing force, they may well play a decisive part in averting a general catastrophe. If they allow themselves to be divided, if they depart at all from the simple principle of "the Balkans for the Balkan peoples," they will renew the horrible experiences which tore and devastated every one of them in the Great War and the Balkan wars which preceded the Great War."

Once again history and events have shown how clear-sighted the speaker was. The Balkan coun-

tries did allow themselves to be divided, partly by old jealousies, partly by fears, partly by the expert machinations of Hitler's spies, fifth columnists and traitors. The Balkans today are Hitler's footstool.

As the year 1939 advanced and the omens of danger became ever more clear, Prime Minister Chamberlain on April 26 announced the government's determination to introduce a bill for conscription. By May 18 the measure had passed its third reading in the House of Commons and was well on its way to become law. Churchill, of course, supported the bill. One of his strongest speeches on the subject was made at Cambridge on May 19, 1939. Picturing reasons for the bill, he said:

"Two remarkable men rose to dictatorial authority. Both, in the early stages, rendered great service to their countries. But both were carried away by the habit of despotism and lust of conquest, and both at the present time seem ready to array themselves against the progress and freedom of the modern age. They cannot pursue their course of aggression without bringing about a general war of measureless devastation To submit to their encroachments would be to condemn a large portion of mankind to their rule; to resist them, either in peace or in war, will be dangerous, painful and

hard. There is no use at this stage in concealing these blunt facts from anyone. No one should go forward in this business without realizing plainly both what the cost may be and what are the issues at stake.

"Let us therefore make it clear at the very outset that a number of nations are now being formed into a Grand Alliance which will in no circumstances attack the Dictator Powers. Nor will we hamper or obstruct their natural and lawful desires; nor will we invade their internal jurisdiction; nor will we seek to deprive them of their legitimate share in the expanding future of the world. Nor will we shed blood except in self-defense or common defense. . . . There is no element of imperial ambition in our policy; no taunts, no wordy provocation, no affront to mere pride, no diplomatic entanglements will tempt us to aggressive action. We stand together against violence and tyranny, and we seek nothing but to make a strong effort with the people of other countries to defend the reign of law and freedom."

On July 27 certain opposition members in the House of Commons revolted against the great summer holiday so customary for Parliament, a holiday one of whose chief purposes was that cer-

tain rich men could go away to Scotland for fishing and hunting. It was proposed, therefore, that when the House adjourned on August 4, it should meet again two weeks later for a statement by the govermnent on the European situation. As usual, Chamberlain proposed adjournment to October 3. This was attacked by men on all sides of the House. Churchill on August 2, seeing the danger ahead, sought some sort of unanimity. He urged the Prime Minister to yield, to conciliate other opinion now so estranged and to make himself the true leader of the nation as a whole. The demand for a shorter holiday period, he said, was due to anxiety over what might happen.

"This is not an occasion when the House should part with reproaches and with difference of opinion. On the contrary, we ought to part as friends who are facing common problems and resolved to aid each other as far as it is possible."

But neither this calm, but moving appeal nor the more heated denunciations of Liberal and Labor members could move Chamberlain. The stubborn, self-centered old man had his way and was backed up by his Tory yes men.

On August 3, the day before adjournment, one of Chamberlain's fuglemen, Sir Thomas Inskip,

made the fatuous statement: "War today is not only not inevitable but is unlikely. The government have good authority for saying that."

Churchill felt he could not let that go unchallenged. On August 8 he broadcast to the United States. He spoke of a queer hush that was hanging over Europe. In graphic words he then explained:

"What kind of hush is it? Alas! it is the hush of suspense, and in many lands it is the hush of fear. Listen! No, listen carefully; I think I hear something—yes, there it was quite clear. Don't you hear it? It is the tramp of armies crunching the gravel of the parade grounds, splashing through the rain-soaked fields, the tramp of the two million German soldiers and more than a million Italians—'going on maneuvers'—yes, only on maneuvers! Of course it's only maneuvers—just like last year. After all the Dictators must train their soldiers. They could scarcely do less in common prudence, when the Danes, the Dutch, the Swiss, the Albanians—and of course the Jews—may leap out upon them at any moment and rob them of their living space, and make them sign another paper to say who began it. Besides, these German and Italian armies may have another

work of Liberation to perform. It was only last year they liberated Austria from the horrors of self-government. It was only in March they freed the Czechoslovak Republic from the misery of independent existence. It is only two years ago that Signor Mussolini gave the ancient kingdom of Abyssinia its Magna Charta. It is only two months ago that little Albania got its writ of Habeas Corpus, and Mussolini sent in his Bill of Rights for King Zog to pay. . . . No wonder the armies are tramping when there is so much liberation to be done, and no wonder there is a hush among all the neighbors of Germany and Italy while they are wondering which one is going to be 'liberated' next."

Dropping this bitter irony, the speaker then got down to brass tacks:

"If Herr Hitler does not make war, there will be no war. No one else is going to make war. Britain and France are determined to shed no blood except in self-defense or in defense of their Allies. No one has ever dreamed of attacking Germany. If Germany desires to be reassured against attacks by her neighbors, she has only to say the word and we will give her the fullest guarantees in accordance with the principles of the Covenant of the

League of Nations. We have said repeatedly we ask nothing for ourselves in the way of security that we are not willing freely to share with the German people. Therefore, if war should come there can be no doubt upon whose head the blood-guiltiness will fall. Thus lies the great issue at this moment and none can tell how it will be settled."

Chapter Eight

PLEADING FOR AIRPLANES

No story of the life of Mr. England would be complete or even faintly adequate if it did not detail in some degree his long seven-year fight to arouse public opinion and compel the various cabinets to take adequate measures to build up a powerful air force and to provide factories where airplanes could be turned out in huge quantities. The fight was a vain fight. Churchill was like one who tolls a fire-bell in the night and fails to awaken the sleepers. Or like one whose alarms were heard but not heeded because no one believed in the dangers to which he would arouse them. It is one of the gigantic and cruel ironies of history that he, who so valiantly tried over and over again to prepare his country against danger from the air, should have been called upon at long last to head his country's government when the air attack was a deadly reality against which Britain was not adequately defended.

In the years before World War I, Churchill at

the Admiralty saw the Germans building great warships and saw, too, that to defend her existence, Britain must outbuild the possible enemy. With the same prescience, seven years ago he saw that the airplane was going to be one of the decisive weapons of the future. So he began the unremitting campaign—often a one-man campaign—which wearied his fellow members in the House of Commons. But even in his case, for once his gift of prophecy and foresight partially foresook him. On March 14, 1933, he discussed the small estimates for a year's building of airplanes. He referred to a rather celebrated speech Stanley Baldwin as Lord President of the Council had made some time before. Baldwin had spoken of the possible bombing of open towns and the murdering of women and children as probably an orthodox and legitimate means of warfare. Baldwin assumed that such warfare would certainly be waged in the next great conflict. He also assumed there was no adequate defense likely to be devised against such bombing.

Churchill said it would not pay an enemy to waste his strength upon open towns and the noncombatants dwelling there. "If," said he, "we were completely defenseless in the air, if we were re-

duced to a condition where we could not deal with this form of warfare, I doubt very much whether even then the victorious Power would be well advised to come and kill the women and children. By intercepting all the trade passing through the narrow seas and on the approaches to this island, they could employ the weapon of starvation which would probably lead to a peace on terms which they thought were desirable."

He was to live to see German airplanes not only attack British shipping in an endeavor to starve the island into submission, but to behold the terrible picture of London and many other British cities and towns ruthlessly bombed, with a resulting harvest of killed and wounded men, women and children who had no part in the war save to endure. He also had the mistaken notion that, if Britain had an adequate air force, it would be almost a complete protection for the civilian population, not indeed against injury and annoyance, but against destruction. The only defense for Britain that he saw was a big air force. Such a force would protect the people from danger until it was victorious or was beaten. He apparently did not foresee night bombing, against which neither side in the present war has so far found adequate de-

fense. Even the overwhelming superiority in numbers that the German air force possesses has not prevented British bombers from taking the long journey to Germany and blasting away at German cities.

In that opening speech in March, 1933, in which he began his fight for airplanes, Churchill called attention to the fact that while appropriations for the army and navy had been increased, those for the air force, the most vital of all, were actually $1,700,000 less than for 1932 and $5,000,000 less than for 1931. This would have been understandable if the country had a huge air force, but it had a mere skeleton force.

A year later Churchill was singing a different tune as to the danger to civilians. He was now convinced that, if a new war broke out in Europe, the civilians would be in as much peril as the men at the front. The government, bringing in its estimates for the air force, provided money for an increase in first-line air strength from 850 to 890—a puny forty new planes. Churchill warned the government that Germany was arming and preparing to arm more heavily. He now drew a totally different picture of possibilities than he had a year before. On March 8, 1934, he said:

"Now that hideous air war has cast the shadow of its wings over harassed civilization, no one can pretend that by any measures which we could take it would be possible to give absolute protection against an aggressor dropping bombs in this island and killing a great many unarmed men, women and children. No Government can be asked to guarantee absolute immunity to the nation if we were attacked in this way by this new arm. It is certainly in our power, however, if we act in time, to guard ourselves, first of all, from a mortal blow which would compel us to capitulate; and, secondly, it is in our power, I firmly believe, to make it extremely unlikely that we should be attacked by this particular method of terrorizing the civil population by the slaughter of non-combatants, which, to the shame of the twentieth century, we are now forced to discuss as a practical issue."

Seven years before the grim reality was faced by myriads of cities and towns in Great Britain, Churchill said: "I dread the day when the means of threatening the heart of the British Empire should pass into the hands of the present rulers of Germany. I think we should then be in a position which would be odious to every man who values freedom of action and independence and

also in a position of the utmost peril for our crowded, peaceful population engaged in their daily toil. I dread that day. But it is not, perhaps, far distant. Not come yet—at least so I believe, or I hope and pray. But it is not far distant."

To this speech Baldwin made one of his soothing syrup speeches containing promises which were never fully made good:

"If all our efforts for an agreement fail, and if it is not possible to obtain equality in such matters, then any Government of this country—a National Government more than any—will see to it that in air strength and air power this country shall no longer be in a position inferior to any country within striking distance of our shores."

It was in 1934 that Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, dreaming sweet dreams of peace and amity in the world, went traveling about Europe, talking about universal disarmament. The French rejected flatly one of his proposals. They thought they had a fine army and they were going to keep it. Churchill thoroughly sympathized with them. Dryly and epigrammatically he told the House of Commons:

"The Romans had a maxim, 'Shorten your weapons and lengthen your frontiers.' But our maxim

seems to be, 'Diminish your weapons and increase your obligations.' "

A self-satisfied government, through Churchill's kinsman, Lord Londonderry, Secretary for Air, stated in the latter part of June, 1934, that it was making preparations in ample time to secure parity in the air, to which Churchill replied:

"Germany is arming, particularly in the air. They have already a civil aviation, which is called 'Air Sport' and which is, I believe, on a gigantic scale, with airdromes, trained pilots and so forth. All they have to do is to give that vast plant a military character. It may take some time, but it will not take anything like as long as it would take us, with our very limited aviation, to develop our air armaments. I have no special knowledge of these matters, but it may well be that by this time next year German aviation will be definitely stronger than ours whatever we do."

For this and other similar warnings, he was taken to task by Sir Herbert Samuel, one of the leaders of what was left of the once-great Liberal party and no particular friend of the government in power. He said:

"Utterly regardless of any question of what parity really means in terms of airplanes and other

equipment, utterly regardless of any needs of the situation, Mr. Churchill comes forward and tells the nation that we ought straightway to double and redouble our Air Force, that we ought to have an Air Force four times as big as we have now, without giving the smallest reasons why this colossal expenditure should immediately be undertaken. That is rather the language of a Malay running amok than of a responsible British statesman. It is rather the language of blind and causeless panic."

When a trained statesman, administrator and public servant like Samuel, a student and philosopher, could go so far astray and be so smugly complacent about the condition of affairs in Europe, it is no wonder the lesser men in Parliament failed to give heed to the warnings Churchill uttered.

The sleeper was partially, but only partially, awakened in July, 1934. Baldwin announced a new five-year program by which the Royal Air Force would be increased by 41 squadrons, or 860 machines. Thirty-three of these squadrons were to be added to the home defense force, which would bring this force up to 880 machines. On July 30 Baldwin made his famous utterance:

"Let us never forget this; since the day of the air, the old frontiers are gone. When you think of

the defense of England, you no longer think of the chalk cliffs of Dover; you think of the Rhine. That is where our frontier lies."

Some of the faithful not only applauded the sentiment, but were pleased with the government's announced Air Force program. Not so Churchill. Boiled down, he said, it meant the cabinet proposed to spend a mere $100,000,000 on the air force, spread over five years. Before the end of that parliament, they would spend about $20,000,000 of this. This probably meant that during the life of that parliament, perhaps, fifty new machines would be obtained. The home defense air strength would be raised from 550 to 600 by the end of the financial year 1935-36. Having regard to the increases being made by other countries, Britain, as a result of the announced program, would be worse off relatively in 1939 than it was in 1934. Cabinet members squirmed uncomfortably on their benches.

"We are a rich and easy prey. No country is so vulnerable and no country would better repay pillage than our own. With our enormous Metropolis here, the greatest target in the world, a kind of tremendous, fat valuable cow tied up to attract the beast of prey, we are in a position in which

we have never been before, and in which no other country in the world is at the present time."

Once again he returned to the charge: Make airplane for airplane with Germany; make more airplanes than Germany. That way lay less, not more, danger of conflict. He took a leaf out of the book of the history of the recent past:

"Before the last world war, the Liberal Government of those days did not hesitate to specify the quarter from which they expected danger, and they did not hesitate to specify the navy against which we were determined to maintain an ample superiority. We measured ourselves before the War publicly and precisely against Germany. We laid down a ratio of sixteen to ten against existing programs and of two to one against any additions to those programs. Such calculations are perfectly understood abroad. They were stated publicly and they bred no ill-will and caused no offense."

In November, 1934, Churchill and five supporters in this matter proposed the following amendment to the address to the throne:

"We humbly represent to Your Majesty that, in the present circumstances of the world, the strength of our national defense, and especially of our air defenses, is no longer adequate to secure

the peace, safety and freedom of Your Majesty's faithful subjects."

Reading the speech Churchill made on the subject over six years ago, one is once more struck by the wonderful accuracy with which he depicted what would happen if England was unprepared. He said no one could doubt that a week or ten days' intensive bombing of London would be a very serious matter. Thousands would be killed or maimed. One of the most dangerous forms of attack would be by incendiary bombs. Under the pressure of air attacks, perhaps millions would be driven out of London. Then there would be the attack on the docks of London and on the estuary of the Thames. Nor would London alone be the subject of attack. Birmingham and Sheffield and the great manufacturing towns would not be immune.

"The danger," said he, "which might confront us would expose us not only to hideous suffering, but even to mortal peril, by which I mean peril of actual conquest and subjugation. It is just as well to confront those facts while time remains to take proper measures to cope with them. I may say that all these possibilities are perfectly well known abroad, and no doubt every one of them has been made the subject of technical study."

That they were known in Germany and made the subject of technical study has been made manifest, even beyond Churchill's vision, by the manner in which docks, oil-storage tanks, and other military objectives have been bombed—not to speak of the indiscriminate bombing of cities and towns, destroying homes and killing non-combatants.

Baldwin was unshaken and unconvinced. In his reply, he said: "If we continue to carry out at the present approved rate the expansion announced to Parliament, so far from the German military air force being at least as strong as, and probably stronger than, our own, we estimate that we shall still have a margin in Europe of nearly 50 percent. I cannot look farther forward than the next two years. Mr. Churchill speaks of what may happen in 1937. Such investigations as I have been able to make lead me to believe that his figures are considerably exaggerated."

That was a statement Churchill never allowed the Conservative leader to forget. On May 2, 1935, he reminded Baldwin that the German air industry was turning out ten times as many airplanes as Great Britain. Germany also had ardent long-trained pilots ready to step into those ma-

chines and ample airdromes from which to fly. Therefore, instead of Britain being 50 percent stronger in the air than Germany, as Baldwin had said she would be, the contrary was the case. At the end of the year, Germany would be two or three times stronger than Britain. The matter of the air force was never allowed to die for long in the House of Commons. Churchill and the few who believed as he did kept the subject alive.

On May 27, 1935, speaking in the great Albert Hall in London, Baldwin made the astounding statement: "No Government in this country could live a day that was content to have an Air Force of any inferiority to any within striking distance of our shores."

But there was such an inferior air force in Britain and the government kept on "living" until Baldwin retired, accepted a peerage and went to the more somnolent and less disturbing atmosphere of the House of Lords, leaving his heir in the leadership, Neville Chamberlain, to face the music. Baldwin's last premiership began on June 8, 1935, when he and Ramsay MacDonald exchanged places, the latter becoming Lord President of the Council. The National Government went to the country in a general election on November 14 and

was returned with the huge majority of 247. Even with this tremendous backing, Baldwin did not have an easy time. The assertions Churchill made concerning Germany's immense rearmament, regarded the army and navy and especially and above all, as regarded the air force, kept coming up to plague Baldwin. In his own defense, Baldwin said he had been misled as to figures. Lord Londonderry, who had been Secretary for Air and was now replaced, sharply contradicted the Prime Minister in a speech he made on June 26, 1936, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. "I was one of the Defense Ministers, and I can say on my own behalf—and I have no doubt my late colleagues will endorse all I say—that I continually kept the Government informed of our deficiencies and of our weakness and also of the increasing armaments of other countries. It was surprising, therefore, when Mr. Baldwin announced to the House of Commons that he had been misled in relation to German rearmament. Mr. Baldwin never was misled."

On November 12, 1936, occurred one of the most extraordinary debates in the history of Parliament, because it was the day of Prime Minister Baldwin's amazing confession. The afternoon began with Churchill and a few friends putting be-

fore the House of Commons an amendment which was in the exact wording of the one they had submitted two years previously. Once more they expressed their fear that the national defenses and, particularly, the air defenses were not adequate for the safety of the nation. Pressing his amendment once more, Churchill reminded the House that on the similar occasion two years before, he had been censured by the leading Conservative papers as a mere alarmist and that Lloyd George had congratulated Baldwin on having so completely demolished the extravagant fears of the speaker.

Churchill then proceeded to do a little demolishing on his own: "What would have been said, I wonder, if I could two years ago have forecast to the House the actual course of events. Suppose we had then been told that Germany would spend for two years four billion dollars a year upon warlike preparations; that her industries would be organized for war, as the industries of no country have ever been; that by breaking all Treaty engagements she would create a gigantic air force and an army based on universal compulsory service, which by the present time, in 1936, amounts to upwards of thirty-nine divisions of highly equipped

troops, including mechanized divisions of almost unmeasured strength, and that behind all this there lay millions of armed and trained men, for whom the formations and equipment are rapidly being prepared to form another eighty divisions. . . . Suppose all that had been forecast—why, no one would have believed in the truth of such a nightmare tale. Yet just two years have gone by and we see it all in broad daylight. Where shall we be this time two years hence? I hesitate now to predict."

Going further, Churchill pinned responsibility for the failure to rearm adequately mainly on Prime Minister Baldwin, who, since 1923, had alternated with Ramsay MacDonald in being either Prime Minister or Lord President of the Council. But, whether in the one post or the other, Baldwin had the power as he was the Conservative leader and the Conservatives furnished the big bulk of the National Government's supporters in the House of Commons. The government, he said, had not given the House of Commons the facts about German rearmament—if it knew them. Churchill said he was astounded that the House had never reacted effectively against the dangers that threatened the country.

"I never would have believed that we should have been allowed to go on getting into this plight, month by month and year by year, and that even the Government's own confession of error would have produced no concentration of Parliamentary opinion and force capable of lifting our efforts to the level of emergency. I say now that unless this House resolves to find out the truth for itself, it will have committed an act of abdication of duty without parallel in its long history."

Baldwin's speech winding up the debate was one long lame defense. One of his excuses was that a democracy is always two years behind a dictator. Then he made one of the most astonishing confessions ever uttered by a statesman and politician of his long career in office. It was designed to explain why he had not vigorously gone ahead with a rearmament program:

"You will remember at that time the Disarmament Conference was sitting at Geneva. You will remember at that time there was probably a stronger pacifist feeling running through this country than at any time since the last war. You will remember the election at Fulham in the autumn of 1933, when a seat which the National Government held was lost by about 7000 votes on no

issue but the pacifist. . . . My position as the leader of a great party was not altogether a comfortable one. I asked myself what chance was there—when that feeling that was given expression to in Fulham was common throughout the country—what chance was there within the next year or two of that feeling being so changed that the country would give a mandate for rearmament? Supposing I had gone to the country and said that Germany was rearming and that we must rearm, does anybody think that this pacific democracy would have rallied to that cry at that moment? I cannot think of anything that would have made the loss of the election from my point of view more certain."

The confession of "party first" was to haunt him for a long time thereafter. But while most of the members of the House of Commons gasped in astonishment, their vote did not follow the path of their gasp. As usual, the Conservative whips saw their duty and did it. The amendment proposed by Churchill was beaten by 337 to 131. The old party game still worked. Prophets need not apply.

Part IV • CLIMAX AT SIXTY-SIX

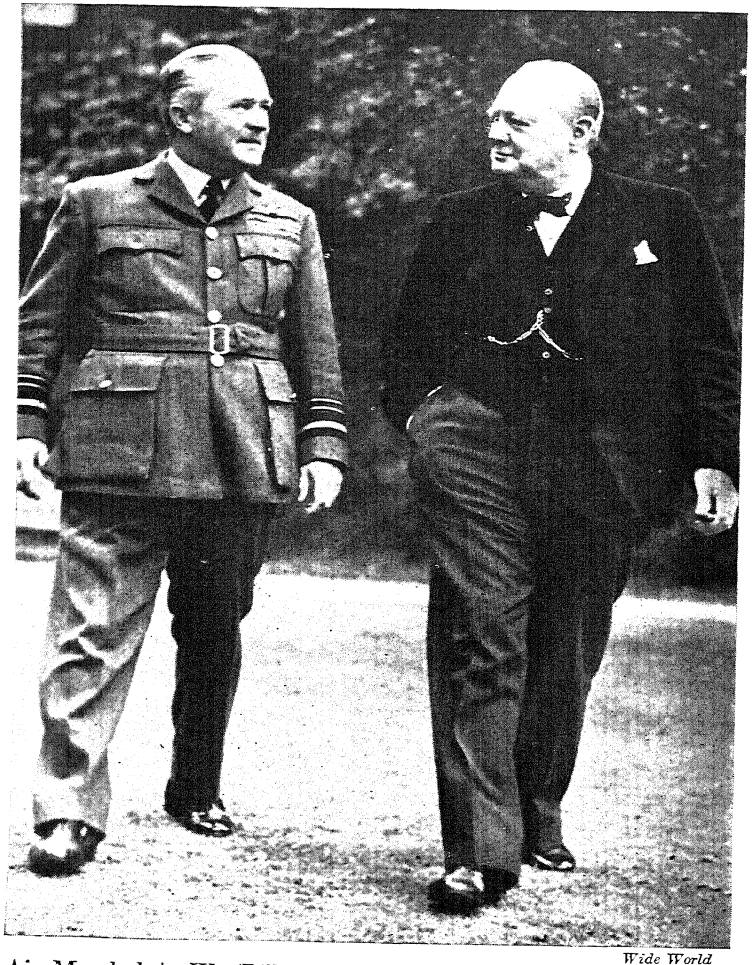
Chapter Nine

"WINSTON IS BACK"

As the skies darkened and the rumble of distant thunder could be heard, and as the storm came ever nearer, Churchill adopted a mellower tone towards the government. He still retained his independence. He still criticized when he thought criticism wise and necessary. But some of the old acid quality was gone, because the patriot in him sensed to the full that soon all loyal Britons would have their testing time and would have to rally around the flag to fight for king and country and the ancient liberties and freedom of the land. This new tone was not hard for him to adopt. Sometimes using a bludgeon, sometimes a rapier in the heat of debate, Churchill was never one to entertain personal hatreds. He was more interested in fighting for causes than in fighting men. No one fought the trades unionists harder than he in the great abortive national strike of 1926, but no one had a higher regard for labor leaders like Ernest Bevin

Acme

"We shall let them have it back!" declares Churchill inspecting bomb damage at Bristol, England. Directly behind the Prime Minister stands Ambassador Winant.



Wide World

Air Marshal A. W. (Billy) Bishop, Canada's great ace in World War I, visits England to inspect airfields and to confer with the Prime Minister

than he. He was soon to prove it by gathering about him all the best brains and ability in the Labor party when he became prime minister.

In this new charitable mood he is found speaking on April 20, 1939, to the Canada Club in London at a meeting in honor of the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett. Among other things he said:

"The policy pursued by His Majesty's Government may have been open to criticism for want of thoroughness and vigor. But no one can say that it has not been animated by patience and good faith, by a persistent desire to avoid war, and by an increased willingness to run risks with other nations to prevent war. I have sometimes differed from the Prime Minister; but anyhow the fact remains that if, on some fateful day, Mr. Chamberlain is compelled by outrage and aggression to give the dread signal, there is no Party in Great Britain, there is no part of the British Empire, there is no free country, which would not feel able to share in the struggle—the hard struggle—without the slightest self-reproach of blood-guiltiness. . . . Some foreigners mock at the British Empire because there are no parchment bonds or hard steel shackles which compel its united action. But there are other forces, far more subtle and far more

compulsive, to which the whole fabric spontaneously responds. These deep tides are flowing now. They sweep away in their flow differences of class and Party. They override the vast ocean spaces which separate the Dominions of the King."

Once again, he recited the proud story of how the British people found their way to liberty:

"In the British Empire we not only look out across the sea towards each other, but backwards to our own history, to Magna Charta, to Habeas Corpus, to the Petition of Right, to Trial by Jury, to the English Common Law, and to Parliamentary Democracy. These are the milestones and monuments that mark the path along which the British race has marched to leadership and freedom."

While the conscription bill was pending in the House of Commons, he spoke at Cambridge on May 19, 1939. Once more he plead that political animosities be dropped:

"I submit that these matters of national defense and foreign policy ought to be considered upon a plane above Party, and apart from natural antagonisms which separate a Government and an Opposition. They affect the life of the nation. They influence the fortunes of the world. I say to any Liberals and Socialists who are here tonight that

it would not be right for them to allow any prejudice they may have against the present Government, or against its head, to prevent their giving a clear, plain vote upon an issue of national safety and of national duty. It is not within the power of any one of us to control or manage events. They may be well managed, or ill managed. It is our duty, so far as lies in each one of us, to do our best for the main purpose and the common cause."

While many of the more well-to-do members of Parliament were spending their summer holiday up in Scotland hunting and fishing, Churchill, at the invitation of the French Army chiefs, went in mid-August to visit the Maginot Line. For a long time—in fact until the utter debacle of the French fighting forces and the earlier turning of the famous line—Churchill, usually so keen a judge, spoke of the French Army as the finest in the world and also spoke of the strength of the Maginot Line. It will only be known, if some day he writes further memoirs, whether these praises were to be taken at their full face value. There is one observation to be made about this: no man of Churchill's stature could have afforded to stress unbelief in the efficacy of the Line or distrust of the fighting qualities of the French Army. In a time when the Allies

were about to face Germany and, later, when they were fighting desperately, there was no place for public criticism by one of the Allied leaders as to the military capabilities of France. One does not wound and discourage a friend and give high hope to an enemy in that fashion.

When Churchill returned to his own country to potter about his home, paint a little, write a little, read a little, events rushed ominously toward the tragedy all feared. August 23 King Leopold of Belgium broadcast an appeal for peace. August 24 came very bad news for Britain and France. They had hoped to have Soviet Russia with them in case of a war with Germany. Germany then would be compelled to fight on two fronts as in the last war. But all the time Soviet ministers were discussing matters with the Allies, they were drawing to conclusions with Germany. On August 24 they blazoned their treacherous play to all the world. In Moscow was signed the Russo-German Pact whereby Russia agreed to remain neutral in the conflict everybody saw was to come. On that same day President Roosevelt appealed to the King of Italy to help in preserving peace and the Pope broadcast an appeal for peace to all the world. All this time the German press was bitterly attacking Poland

and publishing lying statements about the way Germans were being persecuted by the Poles. On August 25 an Anglo-Polish pact was signed in London. Britain pledged assistance to Poland if it was attacked. President Roosevelt sent two peace appeals to Hitler. Two days later Hitler curtly rejected Premier Daladier's appeal to him to make another attempt to settle the questions between Germany and Poland by negotiation. He further categorically said Danzig and the Polish Corridor must be given back to the Reich at once. On September the first, just as Japan had invaded China and Italy had invaded Abyssinia and Albania without troubling to declare war, so Hitler ordered his forces to march into Poland. Britain prepared to stand by its pledges to Poland. The Government on September 3 sent a two-hour ultimatum to Germany, asking that the German forces withdraw from the invaded territory. This ultimatum expired at 11 A.M. Fifteen minutes later Britain declared war on Germany to be followed by a similar French declaration at 5 P.M. Unlike the scenes when Britain went to war with Germany in 1914, there were no wild, cheering demonstrations. The crowds which thronged around Whitehall to be near the Prime Minister's

Downing Street residence and the other crowds around Buckingham Palace were almost silent. There were too many with memories of what war entailed to do any wild cheering or indulge in exultation.

War made Prime Minister Chamberlain do what he had obstinately refused to do while the country was at peace. He gave office to the strongest man in his party. Winston Churchill was made First Lord of the Admiralty. The message was flashed to the British war vessels on the seven seas—"Winston is back." It was a message that was heartily cheered by officers and men. Chamberlain might be timorous, might still dream appeasing dreams, but the men who sailed the ships knew that the Admiralty would be directed by a statesman with a courageous heart and a firm hand.

There were cheers when he made his first appearance as a member of the War Cabinet and addressed the House of Commons. There were cheers when he rose to speak. It was a very grave Churchill they heard. It was no time for braggadocio or heroics. The hour was a serious one and Churchill rose to it. Said he:

"In this solemn hour it is a consolation to recall and to dwell upon our repeated efforts for peace.

All have been ill-starred, but all have been faithful and sincere. This is of the highest moral value—and not only moral value, but practical value—at the present time, because the wholehearted concurrence of scores of millions of men and women, whose co-operation is indispensable and whose comradeship and brotherhood are indispensable, is the only foundation upon which the trial and tribulation of modern war can be endured and surmounted. This moral conviction alone affords that ever-fresh resilience which renews the strength and energy of people in long, doubtful and dark days. Outside, the storms of war may blow and the lands may be lashed with the fury of its gales, but in our own hearts this Sunday morning there is peace. Our hands may be active, but our consciences are at rest."

War was declared at eleven-fifteen that Sunday morning and thousands of people in London were out enjoying the unusually warm sunshine. The parks were thronged with pleasure seekers. The roads were jammed with cars. Long before, gas masks had been distributed free of charge to the millions who inhabit the island kingdom. A large percentage of them carried those gas masks on that first war Sunday. About one o'clock in the after-

noon London had a false air raid alarm. Thousands took shelter but nothing happened. Soon the "all clear" signal was given.

Americans living in London for the first few months following found it hard to believe the country was engaged in a war with the most formidable military machine ever created. "Business as usual" seemed to be the slogan. Also "amusement as usual." One occasionally saw squads of young men who were being trained for military duty marching through the streets. Silvery barrage balloons often floated in the sky. Anti-aircraft guns began to appear in the public parks. Everybody, natives and foreigners alike, had to register and receive an identity card. A slight, but not very troublesome food-rationing system was introduced. But in the restaurants and hotels, where one could buy a meal without giving up ration coupons, the courses seemed to be almost as usual. Theatres and movie houses ran full blast. The dance floors in the big hotels and restaurants and the night clubs did a flourishing business. The favorite tune to which people danced was the mocking—"We'll hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line." On September 11 it was announced that a British Expeditionary Force, with the highest fire power such a

British Army had ever had, was in France. The French and British behind their lines and the Germans behind their Siegfried Line were comparatively quiescent, save for occasional interchanges of artillery fire or activities of raiding parties. In America people were calling it a "phony" war and the bulk of British citizens were almost inclined to agree with them. So far, on the whole, it had not been an unpleasant war. In the meantime, France and Britain were unable to bring any kind of real help to the Poles, who were smashed by Hitler's armies, Warsaw surrendering on September 27. Almost the first serious jolt the British got was when a few German planes dropped bombs on the Shetland Islands on November 7. It was the first occurrence of the kind. The newspapers ironized about the deaths that resulted, some chickens having been killed. November 30 people almost forgot their own war when Russian troops invaded little Finland and the gallant soldiers of that country began a heroic resistance which was to last until the bigger legions won and peace was signed on March 13, 1940. British complacency was badly shaken when, on April 9, 1940, Germany's legions, not only disregarded Denmark's neutrality and invaded that little country, but other troops suddenly

invaded Norway, capturing every important city on the long coast line. British people angrily asked why the intelligence services of their country had not known of the daring Hitler plan and furthermore asked why the British Navy had not been able to overhaul and destroy the German transport ships which carried the troops to the various ports assigned to them. The anger of the people was mollified by a number of daring exploits of the Navy, whose vessels went up dangerous fjords and destroyed enemy ships. But there was once more anger and dismay when it was announced that on May 3, a British Expeditionary Force, which landed in Norway April 15, had been withdrawn, the German forces having a secure hold on the whole of Norway.

Churchill did not often speak in the first months of the war. He was throwing himself with his usual energy into the work of making the British Navy a very important part of the country's war effort. On October 1, 1939, he broadcast to the nation about the first month of the war. Poland was gone, but he optimistically reported that the Navy was taking care of the German submarines. At that time he did not see in them the extra serious menace they later became. He realized that

thus far there had not been much to stir the enthusiasm of the people, so he said to them:

"Meanwhile, patriotic men and women, especially those who understand the high causes in human fortunes which are now at stake, must not only rise above fear; they must also rise above inconvenience and, perhaps most difficult of all, above boredom."

On November 8 it was his painful duty to give the House of Commons a cautious and veiled explanation of the sinking of the warship *Royal Oak* at Scapa Flow by a daring and brilliant maneuver of a German submarine. Scapa Flow was one of the main harbors of the British Navy. In World War I it had been one of the safest of resting places and was so considered this time until the *Royal Oak* was sunk. Churchill promised measures that would prevent similar happenings.

On November 12 he broadcast a report on the first ten weeks of the war. But first he paid a tribute to the Prime Minister:

"You know I have not always agreed with Mr. Chamberlain; though we have always been personal friends. But he is a man of very tough fiber, and I can tell you that he is going to fight as obstinately for victory as he did for peace."

He then proceeded to tell his unseen audience how "well" the war had turned out for the allies in the first ten weeks. The Navy was stronger than in September when war was declared. The anti-submarine forces were three times as numerous. The air force was much stronger. The army was growing in numbers and improving in training every day. The air raid precautions were far better than they were at the beginning of the war. The attack of the submarines had been controlled and they were paying a heavy toll. Nearly all Germany's ocean-going vessels were in hiding or rusting in neutral harbors, while Britain's world trade proceeded steadily in 4000 vessels, of which 2500 were constantly at sea. But the prophet in him was badly at fault. He used the old catch phrase "time is on our side." He believed Italy and Japan would stay out of the war. He asserted the Nazis had not chosen to molest the British fleet and "recoiled" from the "steel front" of the French Army along the Maginot Line. But he was right when he predicted an assault upon Belgium and Holland, despite the assurances Hitler had given those little neutral countries. On December 6 he found it necessary to reassure the House of Commons and, through it, the country. The Germans

had been playing havoc with British war and mercantile vessels by sowing magnetic mines. Churchill told them a defense against these mines was being found. This did come to pass and that method of destruction of shipping lost its value.

December 18 was one of the days of great triumph for the chief of the Admiralty. To a delighted House of Commons, he could recite with Churchillian relish the great story of the wonderful fight three small British vessels, the *Ajax*, *Achilles*, and *Essex*, had made upon the speedier, heavier, more powerfully gunned pocket battleship, the *Graf Spee*. The fight started on December 13 in the South Atlantic, the *Graf Spee* running away badly hit and taking refuge in the harbor of Montevideo. On December 15 she began repairs and took on fuel. The three small British ships—and probably some bigger ones by this time—were waiting outside the mouth of the river Plate. Hitler took no chances. On December 17 the *Graf Spee*, one of the prides of the German Navy, was scuttled by orders of the Fuehrer.

On January 20, 1940, Churchill broadcast to most of the civilized world. Once more he was in his prophetic mood and once more he made predic-

tions which in the ensuing eighteen months were to come only too true. He mentioned the various little neutral states of Europe. "They bow humbly and in fear to German threats of violence," he said, "comforting themselves meanwhile with the thought that the Allies will win, that Britain and France will strictly observe all the laws and conventions, and that breaches of these laws are only to be expected from the German side. Each one hopes that if he feeds the crocodile enough, the crocodile will eat him last. All of them hope that the storm will pass before their turn comes to be devoured. But I fear—I fear greatly—the storm will not pass. It will rage and it will roar, ever more loudly, ever more widely. It will spread to the South; it will spread to the North. There is no chance of a speedy end except through united action; and if at any time Britain and France, wearying of the struggle, were to make a shameful peace, nothing would remain for the smaller States of Europe, with their shipping and their possessions, but to be divided between the opposite, though similar, barbarisms of Nazidom and Bolshevism."

The Baltic states of Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania swallowed up by Soviet Russia and Norway,

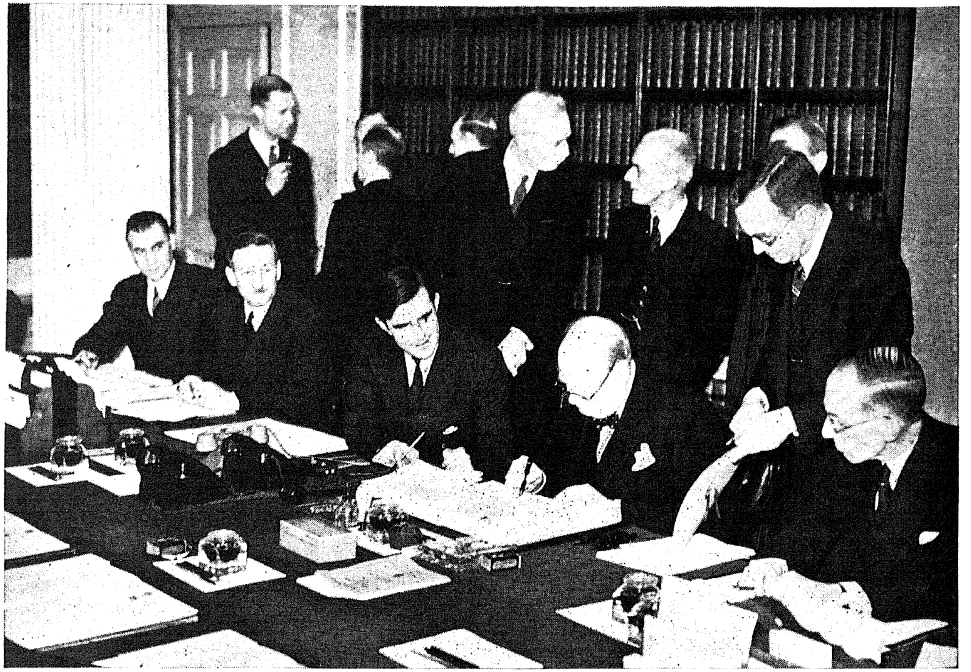
Denmark, Holland and Belgium, under the heels of Hitler now know how truthfully Churchill was speaking. So do the people of Hungary, Roumania, and Bulgaria, puppet states under Hitler's orders and Yugoslavia and Greece, crushed by his overwhelming armed forces.

January 27, 1940, Churchill addressed a big audience in the great manufacturing city of Manchester. The speech was notable because it contained one of those marvellous passages of prose that seem destined to last as long as the English language is spoken. This prose has the splendor of poetry at its best. There is a sort of Shakespearean glow about it and the fervor of the Bible in it. The simple, Anglo-Saxon monosyllables catch fire from the spirit of the man who pours his heart into what he is saying:

"Come then: let us to the task, to the battle, to the toil—each to our part, each to our station. Fill the armies, rule the air, pour out the munitions, strangle the U-boats, sweep the mines, plow the land, build the ships, guard the streets, succor the wounded, uplift the downcast, and honor the brave. Let us go forward together in all parts of the Empire, in all parts of the island. There is not a week, nor a day, nor an hour to lose."

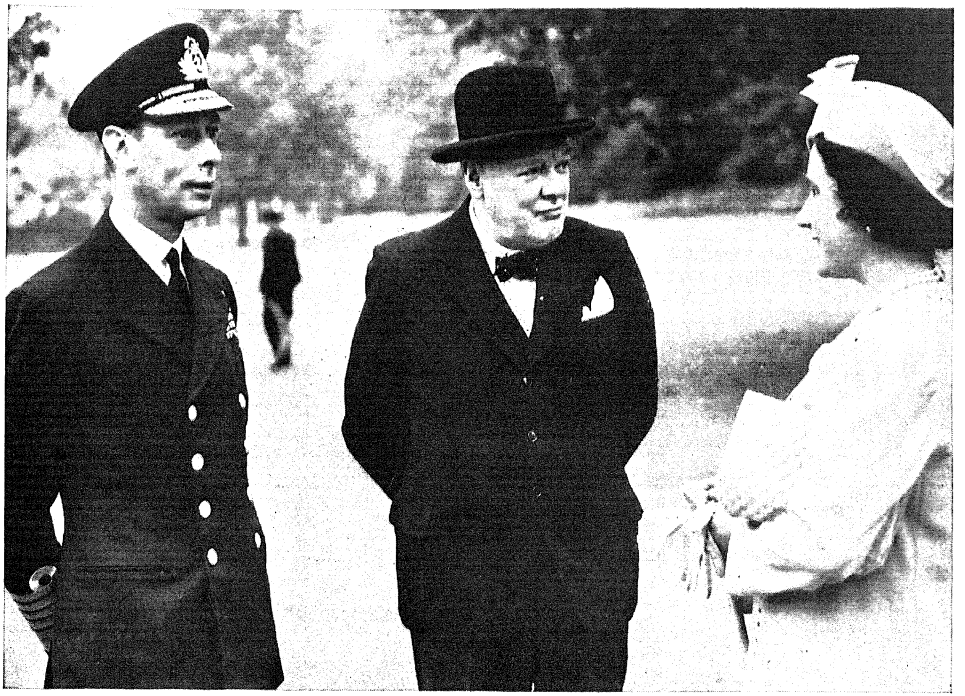
On April 11, 1940, Churchill had to drink of a bitter cup. He explained to the House of Commons the German invasion of Norway and the series of naval fights between the British and German warships that ensued. On the day he spoke the government authorities were still hopeful that the Navy would wreak destructive damage on German warships, that they would bottle up the German troops in Norway and prevent their being supplied with food and munitions, and finally that a joint British and French Expeditionary Force, acting with the Norwegian Army in the North, would maintain a foothold there, providing a spring-board for future offensives against the enemy. Chamberlain was later bitterly castigated, it being claimed he had said that, by invading Norway, Hitler had "missed the bus." On this occasion in his speech to the Commons, Churchill likewise ran completely off the rails:

"In my view, which is shared by my skilled advisers, Herr Hitler has committed a grave strategic error in spreading the war so far north and in forcing the Scandinavian people, or peoples, out of their neutrality. . . . We shall take all we want of this Norwegian coast now, with an enormous increase in the facility and in the efficiency of our



Wide World

Churchill signing the formal agreement leasing British bases in the Western Hemisphere to the United States. John C. Winant, American Ambassador, sits on his right and Vincent Massey, Canadian High Commissioner, on his left.



British Combine, Ltd.

King George and Queen Elizabeth discuss the bomb damage to Buckingham Palace and to London's East End with the Prime Minister.

blockade of Germany. . . . In the upshot, it is the considered view of the Admiralty that we have greatly gained by what has occurred in Scandinavia and in northern waters in a strategic and military sense. For myself, I consider that Hitler's action in invading Scandinavia is as great a strategic and political error as that by Napoleon in 1807, when he invaded Spain."

Churchill was duped in his calculations. He visualized a Norwegian Army, aided by British and French Armies, fighting the Germans every inch of the way, consuming some of the best troops Hitler had at his disposal. In Spain in 1807 Napoleon's army had to fight, not only the Spaniards, but crack troops under Wellington. Some of his best marshals were beaten and many of his finest troops were destroyed. No such similar luck or fortune blessed the arms of Norway, Britain, and France. After many deeds of heroism on the part of the Allied Army and the British Navy, their forces had to leave Norway entirely in the hands of the enemy. The disaster brought about the storm which caused the downfall of Prime Minister Chamberlain.

On May 3 it was announced the British forces were withdrawn from Namsos and that the Nor-

wegian Commander-in-chief had left with them. Members of all political parties demanded a full dress debate in the House of Commons and this was held on the two fateful days, May 7 and 8, 1940. During those two days excitement was at top pitch. The limited public gallery space in the House of Commons and the galleries for distinguished visitors and for the diplomatic corps were jammed from early afternoon until the adjournment late in the night. There was a fever in the atmosphere that could literally be felt. Prime Minister Chamberlain made a long and labored explanation of the events in Norway and the causes that had impelled the government to send an expedition there. At one point in his speech he said:

"A minister who shows any sign of confidence is always called complacent. If he fails to do so, he is labeled defeatist. For my part, I try to steer a middle course, neither raising undue expectations which are unlikely to be fulfilled nor making the people's flesh creep by painting pictures of unmitigated gloom."

Almost every word of this passage was interrupted by members from various parts of the House shouting, "Hitler missed the bus."

"Yes I said it," said the Prime Minister angrily, "and will now explain the circumstances in which I said it, because this is an extraordinarily good example of the way in which prejudiced people can twist words out of their meaning."

He explained that he had used the phrase in a speech three days before the Germans invaded Norway. Therefore, it had no connection with the Norwegian expedition. When he used the phrase, he was explaining that when the war began Germany had a great superiority in strength over Britain and France, but had not then used it. Thus he missed the bus.

Major Clement Atlee, leader of the Labor party and so of His Majesty's Opposition—the Labor party representation being larger than that of the Liberals—attacked the government, saying always the fatal note was—"Too late!"

Sir Archibald Sinclair, leader of the Liberals, likewise attacked the government, and then something unusual happened. Members of the Prime Minister's own party who were serving in the Army, the Navy or the Air Force, attended the session in their service uniforms and joined in the general criticism of the conduct of the war. But on that first day the most deadly bombardment was

by L. S. Amery, a Conservative who had often held cabinet posts. He was bitter and said:

"This afternoon, as a few days ago, the Prime Minister gave us a reasoned argumentative case for our failure. It is always possible to do that after every failure. Making a case and winning a war are not the same thing. Wars are won, not by explanations after the event, but by foresight, by clear decision and by swift action. . . . The Prime Minister expressed himself as satisfied that the balance of advantage lay on our side. He laid great stress on the heaviness of the German losses and the lightness of ours. What did the Germans lose? A few thousand men, nothing to them, a score of transports, and part of the Navy, which anyway will not match ours. What did they gain? They gained Norway, with the strategical advantages which in their opinion at least outweigh the whole of their naval losses. They have gained the whole of Scandinavia."

At the end of his speech, gazing directly at Chamberlain and pointing an accusing finger at him, Amery quoted what Oliver Cromwell said to the Long Parliament when he thought it was no longer fit to conduct the affairs of the nation: "You have sat too long here for any good you

have been doing. Depart I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!"

It was the most sensational ending to a speech that had been heard in the House of Commons in many a long year. The next afternoon came a procession of speakers inveighing against the government. Herbert Morrison, one of the most brilliant of the Labor party members, led off, followed by Lloyd George. In one point of his excoriation of the Norwegian fiasco, Churchill interrupted him to say: "I take complete responsibility for everything that has been done by the Admiralty and I take my full share of the burden."

The old Welsh wizard, always quick in repartee, cause the House to laugh and applaud, when he replied: "The right honorable gentleman must not allow himself to be converted into an air-raid shelter to keep the splinters from hitting his colleagues. . . . The Prime Minister is not in a position to make his personality in this respect inseparable from the interest of the country."

The badly badgered Prime Minister here interrupted with a defensive remark, only to be battered by Lloyd George with the searing words: "The Prime Minister said, 'I have got my friends.' It is not a question of who are the Prime Min-

ister's friends. It is a far bigger issue. The Prime Minister must remember that he has met this formidable foe of ours in peace and in war. He has always been worsted."

Commander Bower, a Tory and a naval man, thrust at the Prime Minister: "He has said that this is a queer war, but I say it is not being waged in any queer way by the Germans. The German waging of this war is not in the least queer. It is ruthless, swift, brilliant in conception and execution, and it has been courageous to the point of temerity."

The afternoon wore on. The lights were lit. Chamberlain shifted uneasily in his seat. More speakers attacked him. At long last, Churchill arose for the defense. He gave a reasoned account of the steps taken after Norway was invaded. He told of the Navy's part. But it was not one of his best speeches. It was not even one of his second best. Churchill has a very acute sense of the temper of the House of Commons and he felt that the House was bitterly against the continuance of the Chamberlain government. Nothing he could say could save it. Dropping the story of Norway, he made one last loyal desperate effort to help Chamberlain. He said that as late as five o'clock

that afternoon they had been told a vote of censure on the government would be taken in the form of a vote on the motion for adjournment. To American readers it is necessary to explain that the votes for the adjournment would be votes for Chamberlain. The votes against adjournment would be votes of censure. Churchill appealed:

"Let me say that I am not advocating controversy. We have stood it for the last two days and if I have broken out, it is not because I mean to seek a quarrel. On the contrary, I say, let prewar feuds die, let personal quarrels be forgotten, and let us keep our hatreds for the common enemy. Let Party interest be ignored, let all our energies be harnessed, let the whole ability and forces of the nation be hurled into the struggle, and let all the strong horses be pulling on the collar. At no time in the last war were we in greater peril than we are now and I urge the House strongly to deal with these matters, not in a precipitate vote, ill debated and on a widely discursive field, but in grave time and due time in accordance with the dignity of parliament."

The vote was insisted upon. The members trooped out to be counted. The result was ayes, 281; noes, 200.

Now the National Government ordinarily counted 431 supporters against 184 in opposition, or a majority of 247. The Conservatives alone had 387 seats and, if all the rest in the House of Commons voted against them, they would still have a majority of 159. Therefore, the majority of 81 for the Government showed that not only so-called National Liberals and National Labor members had voted against the Government, but a very large number of the Prime Minister's own party. Such a vote would not and could not affect a president of the United States, but in Britain it is tantamount to the political death warrant of a prime minister. At least Chamberlain took it as such. He did not cling to the fact that he still had a majority of 81.

There was high political tragedy in the House of Commons that evening. Chamberlain's usually sallow face had turned white as the debate proceeded. Now, as he almost literally stumbled out of the chamber, his countenance was the gray of a man from whom the life had been drained. The triumphant cheers of his political enemies were in his ears as he vanished.

After due deliberation with his advisers, he resigned as Prime Minister.

Chapter Ten

CAPTAIN IN THE STORM

Winston Churchill must have as many political lives as the cat of tradition has actual ones. No man in Britain's public life has been the subject of so many political obituaries. Time and again, when he has attacked the policies of the party to which he happened to belong at the moment, his stand has been said to have written "finis" to any hopes he might have of some day being prime minister of his country. Prominent statesmen and celebrated publicists united in denigrating certain of his qualities, the main result of which was to impress the public with the belief that, though Churchill had filled cabinet post after post with high efficiency, with credit to himself and benefit to the state, the man was not of the sound timber out of which prime ministers are made.

So in 1931, when he was fighting the proposed new deal for India, the *Manchester Guardian*, bible of the liberal thought of the country, said of the one-time darling of the Liberal party, that he was

a mountebank. The late Lord Asquith and Oxford who had had him in various cabinets, said of him, "Winston has genius without judgment." In 1921, E. T. Raymond did not say he was a young man with a great future behind him, but he came near it, writing, "At 37 men looked on Mr. Churchill as a statesman of some achievement. At 47 he is discussed as a politician of some importance."

A. G. Gardiner, a famous editor of a famous Liberal paper of London, wrote of him in 1926: "He is never a demagogue nor a sycophant, and if he changes his party with the facility of partners at a dance, he has always been true to the only party he really believes in—that which is assembled under the hat of Mr. Winston Churchill."

H. G. Wells, the celebrated novelist, wrote of him: "There are times when the evil spirit comes upon him and then I can think of him only as an intractable little boy, a mischevious little boy, a knee-worthy little boy."

Wickham Steed, once editor of London's Thunderer, *The Times*, said of him: "At school Mr. Churchill confesses he was 'backward and precocious.' In these and in other respects he has never ceased to be a school boy. He is still backward and still precocious."

Now the net result of sayings like these was that the British public was pretty well convinced Churchill would never attain what was generally considered to be his life ambition. They were confirmed in this by his long period as a backbencher, as a man of cabinet material who was given no office. The years were passing. The one-time embodiment of youthful audacity, brilliance and enterprise, was visibly ageing. Time carved its lines in his face and stole away his once red hair. The years lay heavily on his shoulders and his big head stooped forward more prominently.

And then came May 10, 1940, and the fall of Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister in the midst of the most dreadful war of modern times. But now there was no thought of promotion to the top position of any of the old school-tie cliques. Men remembered now that one man and one man alone for seven years had begged and pleaded with nerveless cabinets to prepare Britain for the war he was sure was going to come. By a virtual but unspoken demand of the people who were to do the paying and the dying, King George VI summoned Winston Churchill to Buckingham Palace and charged him with the duty of forming a cabinet and carrying on the government. In such a crisis as con-

fronted the nation, the need was not only for a man of courage and drive, but also for a leader around whom all the forces of the country would rally. Churchill stood out as probably the only man in the Conservative party, the only man from the old ruling class, under whom Labor party leaders like Ernest Bevin and Herbert Morrison would consent to serve.

It was in no mood of exultation that Churchill took up the heavy burden. Perhaps he thought of an incident in the last World War which concerned two men he knew well—Marshal Foch and Premier Clemenceau. As a result of the insistence of the venerable French Prime Minister, Foch was made generalissimo of all the Allied armies.

"Are you satisfied now?" queried Clemenceau.

"I am given a lost campaign," replied Foch, "and you ask me whether I am satisfied."

In like manner, Churchill might have replied to friends who congratulated him. He who had been scorned and mocked, he whose ambition to be prime minister had been so often derided, was made captain in the storm, captain when the ship of state, thanks to the neglect of his predecessors, had been left ill prepared to weather the giant

waves and the howling winds which threatened to overthrow it.

When he announced his cabinet, there was general pleasure that he had given posts to some of the younger men in the Conservative party and that so many of the able men in the Labor party had consented to serve—Herbert Morrison as Home Secretary; A. V. Alexander as First Lord of the Admiralty, a post he had occupied before; Major Atlee, leader of the Labor party, as Lord Privy Seal; Ernest Bevin as Minister of Labor; Doctor Hugh Dalton as Minister of Economic Warfare. The main disappointment was that he had not made a clear sweep of all the men who had comprised Chamberlain's last cabinet. The public wanted a new deal, not a partial new deal. But Churchill softened the blow for the late Prime Minister by making him Lord President of the Council, and retained Lord Halifax as Foreign Secretary.

On May 13, 1940, he faced the House of Commons for the first time as head of the Government. He made one of the shortest speeches in his entire career. But it contained a passage that has already been quoted repeatedly as a classic. When the aged Clemenceau was called to the Premier-

ship of France in the last world war, at a time when things looked so critical for the Allied cause and when the defeatists were so loud and so vocal he was challenged as to his policy. He said: "I make war. I make war before Paris; I make war in Paris; I make war behind Paris."

It had the rugged, indomitable sound of a hero out of the pages of Plutarch. In like manner, in his first speech, Churchill said magnificently:

"I would say to the House, as I have said to those who have joined this Government: 'I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat.' We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggle and of suffering. You ask, What is our policy? I will say: 'It is to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us: to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, What is our aim? I can answer in one word: Victory—victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival. Let that be realized; no survival for the British Empire; no survival of all that the Brit-

ish Empire has stood for; no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages, that mankind will move forward towards its goal. But I take up my task with buoyancy and hope. I feel sure that our cause will not be suffered to fail among men. At this time I feel entitled to claim the aid of all and I say, 'Come, then, let us go forward together with our united strength.' "

It was a trumpet call to the nation. It heralded the arrival of a new set of men inspired with a new purpose. The era of dawdling with the war was over. Now the people would be asked to work as they had never worked before. And it was high time. Here is just one little anecdote that will illustrate the deadly spirit of complacency that was still prevalent among so many who should have known better. In the late spring of 1940 a famous nobleman in Yorkshire threw open his extensive grounds to visitors, the fees paid going to a charitable enterprise. From the main gateway to his miniature palace was a distance of about half a mile and to the left and right of the roadway, as far as the eye could see, was land on which nothing grew but wild grass. Scattered here and there were hutches in which pheasants could hatch their brood. The idea was to have plenty of the

birds by the time the hunting season arrived, so that the nobleman and his guests could have good shooting. An American woman expressed her surprise that this land was not plowed up and put to good use.

"Whatever for?" disdainfully asked an English woman of the upper middle class, one of the kind that simply dote on a nobleman and still think he is made of superior clay.

"Plow the land so you can grow food for your army and your people generally in case you have war," replied the American.

"Huh! We have plenty of food," snorted the Englishwoman. This was that kind of thing Churchill and his ministers had to beat down. They had to make people realize that they were all in the same boat and that all must do their part.

Looking around the war zone, the new Prime Minister saw nothing but defeat for those who were resisting the Germans. They had marched through Holland and the Dutch Army formally capitulated on May 15, the Teutons occupying Amsterdam and The Hague and what they had left of Rotterdam after bombing it practically to pieces. On May 16 the Germans crashed past Sedan, despite the best the French could do. May

17 success was crowning their arms in Belgium—Brussels, Malines, and Louvain all being occupied. May 18 they took Antwerp. The French cabinet was reshuffled in panic haste by Premier Reynaud, who recalled the aged Marshal Petain from his ambassadorship to Spain and made him vice premier.

On May 19 Churchill broadcast to the nation. His text was, "Be ye men of valor." It was his first broadcast as Prime Minister. He had nothing but bad news to impart, but he still clung to his faith in the fighting qualities of the French Army.

"For myself, I have invincible confidence in the French Army and its leaders. Only a small part of that splendid Army has yet been heavily engaged; and only a very small part of France has yet been invaded. . . . I have received from the chiefs of the French Republic, and in particular, from its indomitable Prime Minister, M. Reynaud, the most sacred pledges that whatever happens they will fight to the end, be it bitter or be it glorious. Nay, if we fight to the end, it can only be glorious."

Having thus held out hope, though the day was black, he ended: "Centuries ago words were written to be a call and a spur to the faithful servants of Truth and Justice: 'Arm yourselves, and be ye

men of valor, and be in readiness for the conflict; for it is better for us to perish in battle than to look upon the outrage of our nation and our altar. As the Will of God is in Heaven, even so let it be.' "

The Prime Minister and the nation had need for all the valor they could summon up. The Germans had cut off the Belgian, French and British Armies in the north of France and Belgium from contact with the Armies to the south. The Allied forces were being crowded towards the English Channel. What Hitler's generals were striving for was nothing less than another huge capture, such as the Germans had made at Sedan in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. Every day the danger of this became more manifest. Motorized German troops reached the outskirts of Boulogne and Calais, two of the best French ports. May 26 Boulogne was fully taken. Two days later King Leopold of Belgium suddenly surrendered his army of half a million to the Germans. This army had been guarding the left flank of the Allies. This flank was now left wide open and necessitated a mad race to the sea, a race for Dunkirk, the only port open to them on the English Channel, for Leopold's action had enabled the Germans to capture Zeebrugge and Ostend without firing a shot.

Now began one of the greatest agonies of suspense that Great Britain had known since its people a century ago awaited breathlessly the news as to whether Wellington or Napoleon had won at Waterloo. It was known the British troops were seeking to embark at Dunkirk. It was known that the Germans were closing in, seeking to encircle the town, meanwhile keeping up a sharp artillery bombardment of the beaches and attacking with a big force of bombers. The prize the Germans were after was a big one. The material their enemy had would be big booty, but the men of the British Army were far more important. They formed very largely the cream of all the regular soldiers of the island kingdom. They were the men who would have to train future and bigger armies. If they were made prisoners, the result would be a blow to England's military power from which it would be very hard and certainly take a very long time to recover. It seemed that nothing but a miracle could save them. People prayed for that miracle. And it came to pass. The English Channel, which can be one of the stormiest pieces of water in the world, was abnormally calm, so that even little, low-powered motor boats could cross and recross. For two days and nights there was an un-

usual fog for that time of year. This interfered with the accuracy of Germany artillery fire and helped hide boats from the German aircraft. Everything that could take to the water was pressed into service by the British, not only 222 naval vessels, but old ferry boats from Brighton, motorboats and sailing vessels, 650 in all. All day and all night the rescuers worked. All day and all night there were marvellous reunions as the tired, unshaven, famished, mud-caked men were met at British seaport towns or in London by parents and relatives, who looked upon them as if they had been resurrected from the dead. Fathers and mothers patted their sons' shoulders, wives caressed their husbands' dirty hands to reassure themselves the reunion was not a dream. By June 4 it was all over. The vast bulk of the British Expeditionary Force and considerable numbers of French soldiers had been saved. On that same date Churchill told the House of Commons the retreat had cost about 30,000 men. It had been his great fear that not more than 20,000 or 30,000 could be saved. But 335,000 came back. Their loss in material had been immense—nearly 1,000 guns hard to replace, all their transport and all their armored vehicles. Here Churchill began the first of his speeches in

which he did not scruple to tell the British people the truth, secure in the knowledge that they would stand up to it. He told them they must be very careful not to assign to the deliverance of their troops the attributes of a victory. Wars, he reminded them, are not won by evacuations. They must not be blinded to the fact that what had happened in Belgium and France was a colossal military disaster. The French Army was greatly weakened. The Belgian Army was lost. A large part of the fortified lines, upon which so much reliance had been placed, was lost. The enemy had possession of many valuable Belgian and French mining and factory districts. All of the French and Belgian English Channel ports were in German hands, with all that this implied in the way of attacks by air and by submarine. Then he girded himself for his peroration—and his perorations have become famous. He felt the people needed a trumpet call and he gave it:

"Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight

with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this Island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the Old."

The tide of ill fortune still continued. On June 10 Count Ciano, Italian Foreign Minister, informed diplomatic representatives of France and Great Britain that on June 11 Italy would consider itself at war with their respective countries. The hope that Churchill had cherished that Italy would maintain its non-belligerent attitude was thus bitterly disappointed. That same day President Roosevelt, addressing the graduating class at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia, spoke a sentence that was flashed all over the world and that angered the Dictators of Italy and Ger-

many: "The hand that held the dagger has struck it into the back of its neighbor."

The position of France, whose Armies were already fighting a losing fight and whose soldiers were rapidly losing hope, was made precarious by the advance of this new enemy. It seemed now only a matter of days before the end would come. The Germans were advancing at will, taking thousands of prisoners. Premier Reynaud made a futile plea to the United States to send "clouds of airplanes" to France. President Roosevelt expressed the will, but the planes were not in existence. On June 14 the Germans entered Paris unopposed and marched down the splendid Champs Elysees just as German troops did after they conquered France in the war of 1870. June 16 Premier Reynaud resigned, and General Petain succeeded him. June 17 his cabinet rejected a desperate move on the part of the British cabinet, that is, that they merge, the British and French Empires in a Franco-British Union. At the same time Petain asked Germany for an armistice. June 18 Churchill, who had braved the dangers of bombing or capture in France in order to get in touch personally with Reynaud, returned from France and announced sadly that the "Battle of France" was lost. June

20 Petain also asked Italy for an armistice. On June 21 Hitler set the stage for drama. He and his leading men went to the Forest of Compiegne, where stood the railway car in which Marshal Foch received the envoys of beaten Germany on November 11, 1918, and watched them sign the armistice that ended the World War. This time French delegates accepted the armistice terms the Germans had dictated. Hitler said the terms cast no aspersions on an enemy so brave as the French had been. The French said that the terms were hard, but honorable. Under them the German troops occupied more than half of continental France, including Paris. The papers were signed the next day, and on June 24 an armistice was signed with Italy.

Great Britain now stood alone to fight the most powerful military machine the world had ever seen. June 18 Churchill told the House of Commons how serious the situation was, winding up with:

"What General Weygand has called the Battle of France is over. I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institutions and our empire. The

whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this Island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlight uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.' "

Men who heard him in Parliament and others who heard him later broadcast the speech, agreed that it was one of Churchill's finest hours. Unbowed, unbroken, he gave of his courage and his faith to the people of the bulldog breed.

On July 4, he reported with sincere sorrow one of the most remarkable episodes in the war—an attack by British war vessels upon the Navy of their ally—France.

Lest this be charged up to Britain as something reprehensible, the Prime Minister was at

pains to deliver quite an apologia. England he told the House of Commons, had offered to release France from all her treaty obligations, provided the French fleet was sailed to British harbors before the separate armistice negotiations with Germany were completed. Despite personal assurances, given by Admiral Darlan, a strong part of the French fleet sailed for North African ports. The Prime Minister did not have to stress the dangers to Britain if these fine ships were turned over to the enemy. The British cabinet debated all of one afternoon the question of what they should do about the French fleet. The decision was reached that by any means in their power they must place the French ships beyond any chance of Hitler being able to use them. In British ports the Navy seized two old French battleships, two light cruisers, some submarines, including the very large one called the *Surcouf*, eight destroyers, and about two hundred mine sweepers and anti-submarine craft. At Alexandria, Egypt, the British battle fleet there notified the officers of a French battleship, four cruisers and some smaller ships that they would not be permitted to leave.

But the real trouble came at Oran, a port in Morocco. Two of the finest vessels in the French

fleet—the *Dunkerque* and the *Strasbourg*—were there, besides two other battleships, some cruisers and destroyers. A British battle squadron was sent to Oran. The French fleet was given the option of continuing to fight against the German and Italians, sailing under British control to a British port, going to Martinique where they could be demilitarized, or scuttling them within six hours. The French Government, after consultation with the German Government, rejected all these alternatives. Thereupon the British opened fire and the fire was returned. The *Dunkerque* was hit and beached, a battleship of the *Bretagne* class was sunk, as were also two destroyers and an airplane carrier.

Having thus detailed the operation, the Prime Minister defiantly closed: "I leave the judgment of our action, with confidence, to Parliament. I leave it to the nation, and I leave it to the United States. I leave it to the world and history."

The Petain government then broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain. On July 14—Bastille day—the great French national holiday when France was a free and powerful republic—Churchill, in a world-wide broadcast, sought to bring some comfort to the French people by prom-

ising them that a British victory over Hitler would also be a French victory and would mean their freedom from the German thrall. Once more he reverted to the possibility of Hitler attempting an invasion of Britain and once more he uttered his defiance:

"Should the invader come to Britain, there will no placid lying down of the people in submission before him, as we have seen, alas, in other countries. We shall defend every village, every town, and every city. The vast mass of London itself, fought street by street, could easily devour an entire hostile army; and we would rather see London laid in ruin and ashes than that it should be tamely and abjectly enslaved."

On August 20, 1940, the Prime Minister made one of his periodical reviews of the war situation. Paying tribute to the Royal Air Force, he displayed his power to pack a world of meaning into just one sentence: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

The tribute was well earned. During July and August, Great Britain had been subjected to many attacks by German bombing squadrons. Much property was destroyed and many people were killed or wounded. But the Royal Air Force,

largely outnumbered, had taken its toll in bringing down German airplanes and had also made retaliatory attacks upon German cities, hampered though they were by having to fly a far greater distance than Hitler's airmen.

But the speech was notable because of two big subjects touched upon for the first time. Herbert Hoover and others were advocating that the United States should send food to many of the states that had fallen under German domination and whose people were reputed to be near starvation. Churchill rejected the plan of letting down the British blockade, in the first place because the various countries named had had ample food supplies, and if Hitler took them away responsibility was his for the plight of the conquered. In the next place, he pointed out that many valuable foods were also essential to the manufacture of vital war material. Fats could be used to make explosives, potatoes make alcohol for motor spirit, plastics, now used in making aircraft, are made of milk.

Then he gave an astonishing piece of news. He said they had come to the conclusion that the interests of the United States and the British Empire required that the former should have facilities for the naval and air defense of the Western Hemi-

sphere against attack by a Nazi power. Spontaneously, therefore, and without being offered any inducement, they had informed the American Government they would be glad to place such defense facilities at their disposal, by leasing suitable sites in the British Transatlantic possession. There was no question of transferring sovereignty. But Britain would give 99-year leases in Newfoundland and the West Indies. He concluded:

"Undoubtedly this process means that these two great organizations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States, will have to be somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage. For my own part, looking out upon the future, I do not view the process with any misgivings. I could not stop it if I wished; no one can stop it. Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on full flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days."

About two weeks later, on September 3, came to the British the heartening announcement that the United States had transferred to the British Navy fifty old destroyers which were being reconditioned and which would be of vital help in

convoying British merchant vessels and fighting submarines. Concerning this, Churchill told the House of Commons on Sept. 5:

"I have no doubt that Herr Hitler will not like this transference of destroyers, and I have no doubt that he will pay the United States out, if he ever gets the chance. That is why I am very glad that the army, air, and naval frontiers of the United States have been advanced along a wide arc into the Atlantic Ocean, and that this will enable them to take danger by the throat while it is still hundreds of miles away from their homeland."

The days passed and still there was no good news for the British amid the encircling gloom of the war. General de Gaulle arrived off Dakar in French West Africa with a "Free French" force, accompanied by a British naval squadron. The object was to capture that all-important port which is a jumping-off place for the nearest voyage or airplane flight to South America. French cruisers had forestalled the expedition. When armed resistance began and British ships were hit, the action was broken off and the expedition sailed away. On September 27 Japan formally joined the Axis, signing a military pact with Germany

and Italy which practically bound the Asiatic power to attack the United States in case that country entered the war between Britain and the European Axis powers. Churchill made no attempt in his war review on October 8 to the House of Commons to minimize the nature of the news. But once more he wound up with memorable words:

"Long, dark months of trials and tribulations lie before us. Not only great dangers, but many more misfortunes, many shortcomings, many mistakes, many disappointments will surely be our lot. Death and sorrow will be the companions of our journey; hardship our garment; constancy and valor our only shield. We must be united, we must be undaunted, we must be inflexible. Our qualities and deeds must burn and glow through the gloom of Europe until they become the veritable beacon of its salvation."

One of the things that has been constantly in Churchill's mind is that the Petain Government, under pressure from Hitler, may be dragooned into lining up with the Axis against Great Britain. This might take the form of allowing German troops to pass through unoccupied France into Spain for an attack on Gibraltar or for German pressure upon Portugal, or both. It might take the

form of turning the French Navy over to German use. The French people have had little access to the truth about world events since their government signed an armistice with Germany. In Paris the Nazified French press prints what the German masters want published. In unoccupied France also the press is muzzled. The news is colored or deleted according to the wishes of the Petain-Darlan Government, which always has a weather eye on Hitler and fears to let anything be published which would offend or irritate him. Under these circumstances, Churchill thought it wise to make a special broadcast to the French people. This he did in both English and French on October 21, 1940. It was one of the most moving and adroit of his recent compositions. It was especially apropos because Churchill had always been a stout defender of the cooperation between Britain and France and, perhaps, an over-fervent believer in the potency of the French Army and its leaders. So he could say with truth and not mere rhetoric:

"Frenchmen! For more than thirty years in peace and war I have marched with you, and I am marching still along the same road. Tonight I speak to you at your firesides wherever you may

be, or whatever your fortunes are: I repeat the prayer around the *louis d'or*, *'Dieu protége la France.'* Here at home in England, under the fire of the Boche, we do not forget the ties and links that unite us to France."

He promised them that when the British won their victory over Hitler, they would not forget France and would share their victory with the French people, removing the German yoke from their shoulders. But he warned them against allowing the Nazis to disintegrate their nation. Said he:

"By all kinds of sly and savage means, Hitler is plotting and working to quench for ever the fountain of characteristic French culture and of French inspiration to the world. All Europe, if he has his way, will be reduced to one uniform Bocheland, to be exploited, pillaged and bullied by his Nazi gangsters. . . . It is not defeat that France will now be made to suffer at German hands, but the doom of complete obliteration."

He closed with a few words that are more like a prose counterpart of old French lullabies in their poetry, their beauty, and their simplicity:

"Good night then: sleep to gather strength for the morning. For the morning will come. Brightly

will it shine on the brave and true, kindly upon all who suffer for the cause, glorious upon the tombs of heroes. Thus will shine the dawn. *Vive la France!* Long live also the forward march of the common people in all the lands towards their just and true inheritance, and towards the broader and fuller age."

On December 23 he followed this up with a broadcast to the Italian people. It was an attempt to speak over the head of Mussolini and to help undermine the Italian people's will to war. It was apropos at that time, because the Greeks were beating the Italians and the British were making a mess of the Italians in Africa. Churchill began more in sorrow than in anger:

"We are at war—that is a very strange and terrible thought. Whoever imagined until the last few melancholy years that the British and Italian nations would be trying to destroy one another? We have always been such friends. . . . In the last war against the barbarous Huns we were your comrades. For fifteen years after that war we were your friends. . . . We liked each other; we got on well together. There were reciprocal services; there was amity; there was esteem. And now we are at war; now we are condemned to work

each other's ruin. Your aviators have tried to cast their bombs upon London; our armies are tearing and will tear your African Empire to shreds and tatters."

He queried how this had come about and he answered that it was the work of one man, their Duce. Churchill said he had appealed to Mussolini to keep the peace and had merely received from him a "dusty answer." Now Attilla, with his hordes of ravenous soldiery and his gangs of Gestapo policemen, was coming into Italy to occupy, hold down, and "protect" the Italian people. It was only one of many messages to the Italian people. Time after time, when the British Fleet in the Mediterranean had carried out daring exploits in that sea, which Mussolini liked to call "Mare nostrum," Churchill would embody in his speeches taunting references to the fact that the much-vaunted Italian Fleet had either run away or remained discreetly in an Italian port, not daring to venture out. But, perhaps, his most biting reference of all came on April 27, 1941, when he broadcast to all the world. The Italian armies, beaten by the Greeks when they were fighting alone, had driven back from Albania their valiant enemy when little Greece had to face also the terrific impact of mas-

sive German armies coming down from the North. In North Africa, also, the Italians had seen most of the terrain they lost to the British early in the year regained, largely due to German troops. Heartened by these things, Mussolini, who had been silent in defeat, once more became voluble. And this led Churchill to the following:

"I dare say you read in the newspapers that by special proclamation the Italian dictator has congratulated the Italian army in Albania on the glorious laurels they gained by their victory over the Greeks. Here surely is the world's record in the domain of the ridiculous and contemptible. This whipped jackal Mussolini, who to save his own skin made all Italy a vassal State to Hitler, comes frisking up to the side of the German tiger with yelps not only of appetite—that could be understood—but even of triumph. Different things strike different people different ways, but I am sure there are a great many millions in the British Empire and the United States who will find a new object in life in making sure that when we come to the final reckoning, this absurd impostor shall be abandoned to public justice and universal scorn." In an earlier broadcast, Churchill found another epithet. Mussolini was the "Italian Quisling."

His broadcast on February 9, 1941, was notable because many phases of it were written with an eye to happenings in the United States. The lend-lease bill was under discussion in Congress. Isolationist senators and orators for various keep-out-of-the-war societies were telling the American people their fear that President Roosevelt would take the country into war with Germany and that their boys would soon be overseas.

Churchill's reply to that was:

"This is not a war of vast armies, firing immense masses of shells at one another. We do not need the gallant armies which are forming throughout the American Union. We do not need them this year, nor next year; nor any year that I can foresee. But we do need most urgently an immense and continuous supply of war materials and technical apparatus of all kinds. We need them here and we need to bring them here. We shall need a great mass of shipping in 1942.

Wendell Willkie had come to England with a message from President Roosevelt, which contained verses by Longfellow. Churchill now broadcast what he said was his answer:

"Put your confidence in us. Give us your faith and your blessing, and, under Providence, all will

be well. We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle, nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools, and we will finish the job."

On April 9, 1941, in his regular review of the war, addressing the House of Commons, Churchill not only spoke of vital matters connected with France, but made an outright bid for American convoy of ships carrying food and munitions.

Turning first to France, he said he welcomed the recent declaration of Marshal Petain that France would never act against England or go to war with her. The Prime Minister said any course of action against England would be so monstrous that it might well alienate from France for long years to come any sympathy and support from the great American Democracy. He was sure the French nation, if allowed free expression, would repudiate any such shameful course. However, the British people must realize that the Vichy Government was in great measure dependent in many matters, though happily not in all, upon Hitler's desires. Hitler had seized much French food and had hundreds of thousands of French prisoners. He could dole out food and prisoners

in return for French hostile propaganda or unfriendly acts against Britain.

He thrust at Admiral Darlan, head of the French Navy, a power in the Vichy Government and, apparently, a bitter enemy of the British:

"Admiral Darlan tells us that the Germans have been generous in their treatment of France. All the information which we have, both from occupied and unoccupied France, makes me very doubtful whether the mass of the French people would endorse that strange and sinister tribute."

He said the British government had permitted considerable quantities of ocean-borne food to go to France. However, when it came to thousands of tons of rubber and other vital war materials going directly to the German Armies, the government was bound to enforce its blockade more tightly, even at the risk of collision with French warships at sea. This was his reply to Darlan's threat of naval action. Churchill also pointed out that some attempt might be made to move French warships from North African ports to ports in France now under German control or which might fall into German control. He hoped the French people would understand the consequences which might follow such an attempt.

Then he spoke of the Battle of the Atlantic, with the grievous increased losses of British merchant shipping that was due to German attacks. It had been impossible to make good the losses. The only way to accomplish gains over losses, without sensible contraction of Britain's war effort in 1941-42, was for another gigantic building of merchant vessels in the United States, similar to the prodigy of output accomplished in America in 1918.

Then he made his outright bid for convoys: "The defeat of the U-boats and of surface raiders has been proved to be entirely a question of adequate escorts for our convoys. It will, indeed, be disastrous if great masses of weapons, munitions and instruments of war of all kinds, made with the toil and skill of American hands at the cost of the United States and loaned to us under the aid-to-Britain bill, were to sink into the depths of the ocean and never reach the hard-pressed fighting line. That would be lamentable and I cannot believe it would be found acceptable to the proud and resolute people of the United States."

As the German air squadrons have more and more often flown over Great Britain, bringing vast destruction to the cities and adding immensely to the lists of the dead and wounded, Churchill, like

King George, has made frequent visits to the stricken places, mingling with the people, cheering them by his presence and being in turn cheered by them. The great aristocrat has become the great commoner. More than ever before, he has understood the character of the people he leads. After Bristol had been badly blasted by the Germans, he went there on April 12, 1941. He went there as prime minister to view the damage. He went there as Chancellor of Bristol University to confer an honorary degree upon John G. Winant, American Ambassador to Great Britain. People came from the ruins of their humble homes to cheer him and all he could say for the moment in a voice choking with emotion was: "God bless you all."

But, later, speaking at the university, he said:

"I see the spirit of an unconquerable people. I see the spirit bred in freedom and nursed in traditions which have come down to us throughout the centuries and which will enable us most surely at this moment, this turning point in the history of the world, to bear our part in such a way that none of our race who come after us will have any reason to cast reproach upon their sires."

Once again, on April 27, 1941, in his world wide broadcast, he spoke of the common people and

their fortitude. He had had a hard two weeks. The Axis powers had smashed Yugoslavia and Greece and the small British Expeditionary Force in Greece had been severely mauled. In North Africa the Axis armies had advanced into Egypt. Some of the newspapers, for the first time in months, were criticizing the government and were referring to discontent among the people.

Here was Churchill's reply: "I was asked whether I was aware of some uneasiness which it was said existed in the country on account of the gravity, as it was described, of the war situation. So I thought it would be a good thing to go and see for myself what this uneasiness amounted to, and I went to some of our great cities and seaports which have been most heavily bombed and to some of the places where the poorest people have got it worst. I've come back, not only reassured, but refreshed.

"To leave the offices in Whitehall with their ceaseless hum of activities and stress and to go up to the front, by which I mean the streets and wharves of London or Liverpool, Manchester, Cardiff, Swansea, or Bristol, is like going out of a hothouse onto the bridge of a fighting ship. It is a tonic, which I recommend to any who are suffering

from fretfulness to take in strong doses when they have need of it. . . . In the very places where the malice of the savage enemy has done its worst and where the ordeal of the men, women and children has been most severe, I found their morale most high and splendid. . . . Of their kindness to me I cannot speak, because I have never sought it or dreamed of it and can never deserve it. I can only assure you that I and my colleagues, or comrades rather, for that is what they are, will toil with every scrap of life and strength, according to the lights that are granted us, not to fail these people or be wholly unworthy of their faithful and generous regard."

In this same broadcast, he explained that England had been in honor bound compelled to send an expeditionary force to help the Greeks, even though they knew the risks of failure they were taking. Turning to the future, he painted in dull colors the tremendous task they had in hand—fighting the "Battle of the Atlantic," the contest in which merchant vessels bearing food and munitions to Britain were being attacked by surface raiders, submarines and Stuka bombers. For that reason he voiced his thanks that President Roosevelt had announced that the American Navy was

going to patrol the seas far out from the American coast. This showed how closely bound up with Britain was the United States, Churchill remarked. The resources of the United States and the British Empire would prevail. So even in that dark week, he once more stressed the hopeful sound:

"No prudent and far-seeing man can doubt that the eventual and total defeat of Hitler and Mussolini is certain in view of the respective declared resolves of the British and American democracies.

On May 7, 1941, Churchill boldly challenged the House of Commons to give him a vote of confidence. His government had come in for some criticism following British defeats in Libya and the forced withdrawal of British troops from Greece which the Germans fully occupied following their brief, successful crushing of Yugoslavia. He made no apologies. He said if he had to do it over again, once more he would have sent troops to try to help Greece. He also reviewed the untoward events in Iraq where by a coup a pro-Nazi government was set up. He did not minimize the dangers Britain faced. The Battle of the Atlantic was far from won. The loss of the Nile Valley, Suez Canal and Malta and the naval position in the Mediterranean,

if the Germans were successful, would be heavy blows to the British cause. The army and navy intended to fight with all their strength to avoid these blows. Every member of the House of Commons, who voted, favored the vote of confidence in the government, with the exception of three lone men—Alfred Salter and D. N. Pritt, left wing Laborites and William Gallacher, the only Communist in the House.

On May 20 Churchill had a mixed bag of good and bad news to give to the House of Commons. The good was the surrender of the Duke of Aosta and a considerable Italian army back in the mountains of Ethiopia. The bad was the intensive German attack upon British and Greek troops in the island of Crete, the enemy being brought to the scene of the fighting by troop-carrying airplanes and by gliders. In many quarters this was thought to be a rehearsal for the expected invasion of Britain.

In the last week of May Churchill had further bad news to impart. The battle cruiser *Hood,* the biggest war vessel in the world, had met the German battleship *Bismarck* in a fight in the waters between Greenland and Iceland and had been blown up by a lucky shot the Germans aimed at her

powder magazines. Britain was stunned by this loss, and British morale suffered a heavy blow. On May 27 Churchill told the House of Commons the *Bismarck* had been pursued in her flight from British warships, had been caught up with, and had been hit. Said he: "We do not know what were the results of our bombardment. However, it appears that the *Bismarck* was not sunk by gunfire and will be dispatched by torpedo."

A few minutes later, as an ordinary House of Commons debate was proceeding, a message was sent in to Churchill sitting on the government bench. He glanced at the paper and then rose, saying:

"I don't know whether I might venture with great respect to intervene, but I have just received news that the *Bismarck* has been sunk."

The old master with his instinct for the dramatic once more electrified the House. All semblance of parliamentary proceeding stopped. Members on all sides of the House vied in cheering the message which brought reassurance that the British navy was still on the job. Germany's last word in war vessels was no more.

Late in May the government proposed conscription in Northern Ireland. Loyal Ulstermen favored

it, but almost immediately Premier Eamon de Valera of Eire protested violently. The reason for this, of course, was the large number of Irish Nationalists in the six counties which comprise Ulster. Churchill several days later on May 27 told the House of Commons the conscription plan had been dropped. He said he believed it should be enforced in Northern Ireland, but that it would be more trouble than it was worth.

But the war effort of the other parts of the dominion brought forth the Prime Minister's welcome praise. In a broadcast on June 1 to Canada, he said:

"Canada is playing her just part in the laying of the foundation of a wider and better world . . . To Nazi tyrants and gangsters it must seem strange that Canada, free from compulsion, pressure, so many thousands of miles away, should hasten forward into the field of battle against the evil forces of the world . . . Canadians are the heirs of another tradition — the tradition of valor and faith which they keep alive in these dark days . . . When the test comes and if the test comes, and come it may, I know the Canadian troops will prove that they are the worthy sons of those who stormed Vimy Ridge twenty-four years ago."

Chapter Eleven

PERSONALIA

In the days before he entered the Government once more and long before he became Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, eminently a home-lover, spent much of his time, when not in the House of Commons, at his residence, Chartwell Manor, three miles from Westerham in Kent. It is an old red brick Elizabethan house that Churchill bought with the money one of his famous books earned for him. It was the fulfillment of a long dream. Here the Admirable Crichton of England's latter days wrote his later books. Here he polished his speeches and sharpened his epigrams. Here he painted pictures. Here he built brick walls, holding a card from the brick-layers' union. Here he watched his black swans sail proudly on the miniature lake in his grounds.

He chose Kent, not because any of his family had ever had any particular connection with that famous county. No, Kent was selected out of tribute to a woman who played a large part in his

infant years. When his father and mother were busy with their own political or social affairs, the infant Winston was left largely to the care of his nurse, a Mrs. Everest. In memoirs of his early years, Churchill calls her his confidante. It was she who looked after him and attended to all his wants. It was she who taught him to be fond of Kent. She called it the true garden of England. She said no county could compare with Kent any more than any country could compare with England. The capital of Kent was Maidstone. She drew pictures of Kent that made the child's mouth water, for it was the blessed land where grew in abundance the most luscious strawberries, cherries, raspberries and plums.

In his sixties he found the small fruits of Kent just as delicious as his old nurse had represented them to be. They were quite up to the Churchill standard of what they should be. It is well to remember what his friend, the late Lord Birkenhead, said of him: "Winston's tastes are very simple. All he wants is the best."

His wife once put it in another way: "If you want to make Winston happy, the first and most important thing is to feed him well. He must have a good dinner. It is very important in his daily routine."

Of course that was in the days before the war, when there was no such thing as rationing. Nowadays his menu is far simpler. Churchill not only appreciates good food, but he is not averse to pottering around the kitchen himself. In the main, his tastes in food are thoroughly British. His observations on American menus are rather amusing. Some years ago he wrote a special article for *Collier's Weekly* in which he discussed food. Lest he be thought greedy, he said he fortified himself with a dictum of Doctor Johnson: "I look upon it that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind anything else."

One of the things about America that intrigued the famous statesman was the omnipresence of ice water before, during and after meals. To this lover of Scotch whiskey, brandy, and vintage wines, mere water seemed a "bleak beverage." He found that Americans of every class ate much lighter foods than the British. Fruit, vegetables and cereals played a large part. He confessed in himself the old John Bull came out—that he was a beef-eater. He expected his wife to have beef for him at least once a day. He thought American chickens were smaller than the British breed. And here he made a curious mistake. He thought when

Americans talked about squabs, they meant chicken. For this Briton, with his education in eating the coppery-tasting English oyster, the American bluepoint was found to be a "serious undertaking." Shad roe and terrapin he found "entertaining." He agreed that soft shell crabs and corn on the cob were not by any means unpalatable, but should not be eaten too often. The one food that seemed to arouse his enthusiasm was the American lobster, which he found unrivalled anywhere for flavor and succulence.

Although celebrated and often laughed at for his collection of all kinds of hats and canes, it is the black cigar clenched in his teeth that is best known to all Britons. The press photographers are partly responsible for this, but even more so are the cartoonists. They always pictured Stanley Baldwin by exaggerating his bulbous nose and showing him with his ever-present pipe. Neville Chamberlain, of course, was never drawn without his umbrella. But in all sketches Churchill and his cigar are inseparable. Moreover, it is the truth, just as are cartoons of President Roosevelt and his cigarette in its long holder.

Churchill does not find time nowadays to write the books he had planned just before the war broke

out. His literary efforts now are mainly confined to dictating his speeches to the House of Commons, the very few orations he delivers nowadays, and the broadcasts which are eagerly listened to all over the world. He permits himself in those some epithets that the more polite English speakers shun as being too rude. Churchill has no such squeamish scruples. To him the leaders of the Nazi and Fascist outfits are "gangsters" and "criminals" and he calls them so. He does not hesitate to refer to England's greatest foes as "Huns" and "Boches." Things are too grim for him to fight with rose water. They are likewise too serious now for the display of his famous gift of repartee, of which so many samples are to be gathered from his sayings throughout happier years. Here are just a few:

"Have you read my book?" queried a man.

"Not at all. I only read for pleasure or profit."

During the last war for a time Churchill was an officer at the front in France. Front meant exactly that with him. He lived near it. He spent his hours up where the firing was. When some very highly placed brass hats inspected his regiment, he led them to a spot where shells were falling close.

"This is very dangerous," said one of the generals.

"Yes sir," said Churchill, "you know, this is a very dangerous war."

When he was a young subaltern in the British army, he grew a reddish moustache. A young society miss could not fancy him, said: "I like your politics as little as I like your moustache."

"Don't worry," replied Churchill silkily, "You won't come in contact with either."

In the days when almost alone he fought in Parliament for British armament, particularly in the air, he took the wind out of the sails of a tiresome Tory orator by saying: "I am always being told it is about time the British lion showed his teeth. I reply: 'Not before he has gone to the dentist.'"

About the only time since he became prime minister that he allowed himself a quip was recently when he said: "We are waiting for the long-promised German invasion. So are the fishes."

More bitter was his reply when somebody asked him why he did not order the Royal Air Force to blast German cities and kill Germans, just as the Germans were killing British civilians, instead of making his airmen confine their efforts to bombing

military objectives. Churchill answered in three words: "Business before pleasure."

In red-hot debate one day in the House of Commons he said of one of the members that he had sat on the fence so long the iron had entered his soul. In the same speech he defined a politician as "a man who is asked to stand, wants to sit and is expected to lie."

Once in debate with his old chief and long-time friend Lloyd George, the Welsh wizard of the last war, Churchill twisted an old quotation and made it fit: "Heaven knows no rage like love to hatred turned; nor hell a fury like a wizard scorned."

In the days when Ramsay MacDonald was head of the second Labor government, Churchill convulsed the House by calling him a "boneless wonder."

He once blasted the cabinet of Arthur Balfour by saying: "They are a class of right honorable gentlemen—all good men, all honest men—who are ready to make great sacrifices for their opinions, but they have no opinions. They are ready to die for the truth, if they only knew what truth was."

Churchill had often prodded Stanley Baldwin when prime minister because he did not devote

more time and money to rearmament. One day Baldwin got "tough" and said, squinting at the Hitler regime: "Our frontier is now on the Rhine."

That was too much for Churchill, who knew England's weakness in the air. So he shot back instantly: "Can we be sure the Germans will not reply, 'Our targets are on the Thames'?"

Even when some of his remarks are not humorous, they have the brevity that is wit. Referring to the fact that civilians are in just as much danger as the soldiers, sailors and airmen and have to endure just as much, Churchill said: "This is a war of the Unknown Warriors."

Here are a few recent examples of his ability to put a world of meaning into one sentence:

"A little mouse of thought appears in the room and even the mightiest potentates are thrown into a panic."

"If we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future."

"I deprecate any comparison between Hitler and Napoleon; I do not wish to insult the dead."

"The whole history of the world is summed up in the fact that when nations are strong, they are not always just, and when they wish to be just, they are often no longer strong."

For a man who has been in public life for so long there are comparatively few Churchill interviews. Most of the times when he did consent to talk to reporters for publication, it was in the United States. It is a fact that statesmen of Europe, who maintain an almost sphynxlike silence when meeting journalists in the Old World, talk in the New. One reason is that they are told interviewing is an old and accepted custom in the United States and that any one who wants to put his best foot forward in America had better submit to the ordeal. For a large part of his adult life Churchill has been a cabinet officer and British cabinet officers do not give interviews. In fact they very, very seldom have press conferences. When they have something to say, they say it in Parliament, or in a speech at some banquet or political meeting. Aside from that, Churchill has always had a very keen idea of the value of his thoughts and, putting them into writing, has been able to sell the product at good prices. He would, doubtless, approve what George Bernard Shaw once said to one of the authors of this book: "Why should I let you pick my brains? What I tell you, I can write down in a few minutes and sell to Blank in the United States for $500."

One of the few times Churchill met American newspapermen stationed in London was in the spring of 1940 when he was still First Lord of the Admiralty. In the British capitol at that period there dwelled a woman of means who liked the American journalistic colony and who used to have them to luncheons where they could meet intimately the men who were prominent in British political life. On this particular spring day the guest of honor was Churchill. There was another distinguished guest—A. V. Alexander. He was there at Churchill's request. In 1929, when Ramsay MacDonald formed his second Labor party government, Alexander was named First Lord of the Admiralty. Now Alexander had been one of the prominent men in the great cooperative movement which has retail and wholesale stores all over Britain. One of the Tory papers sneered: "At least Alexander will be the first cooperator and the first Baptist lay preacher to be ruler of the King's Navy."

He proved to be an excellent First Lord, one who became very popular, not only with the seamen, but with the brass hats. When war broke out in September, 1939, it was arranged that the Labor party should establish liaison officers be-

tween themselves and each of the great armed service departments. Under this arrangement, Alexander was opposite number to Churchill. So it was natural that Churchill should ask that Alexander be present at the luncheon with the reporters. It was more than a mere piece of courtesy on Churchill's part. The new First Lord had a genuine admiration and friendship for the former First Lord. This was evidenced by the fact that as soon as he became prime minister, Churchill promptly made Alexander head of the navy—one of the key positions in England's war making effort. At the luncheon, during which Churchill sipped champagne and then lit one of his famous, long, black, potent cigars, the hostess announced that he did not intend to make any kind of set talk. What he would like would be to have an off-the-record session, during which the Americans could ask him any questions they desired. It was a most satisfying experience. The newspapermen could, of course, not quote him directly, but they got more background information that afternoon than they had ever had before. The First Lord was never at a loss for an answer, and he replied very fully to every query, often bringing Alexander into the discussion. Not only that, he

ranged farther afield and even gave his opinion about matters connected with the Army and the Air Force. This reminded some of the veteran correspondents that during World War I, when he represented the constituency of Dundee and was, at first, head of the Admiralty, there was current a set of doggerel lines which ran something like this:

> There was a young man of Dundee
> Whom they gave command of the sea.
> He also had command
> Of the air and the land
> Just to make it quite fair for all three.

At a later period in 1940-41 the newspapermen were not quite so pleased with him. Their complaint was that important pieces of war news were kept from them and the public so that Churchill could dramatically reveal the facts in speeches to the House of Commons. "Dramatically" was the right word. With his genius, there is also an actor in Churchill. He dramatizes himself and the situation in which he finds himself. It is perhaps one of the attributes of genius. Napoleon had it. His famous addresses to his army, beginning "Soldiers!" read like lines from a

French play, only they lacked the Alexandrine verse. As for Churchill, he said it of himself many years ago, in the days when he was at the front as a newspaper correspondent: "I can never doubt which is the right end of the wire to be at. It is better to be making news than taking it; to be an actor rather than a critic."

Churchill is making news all the time now. After seven years as a backbencher, a critic, he is today the actor in the stellar role in the great drama that is playing out Britain's fate.

Thirty-five years ago, when Churchill was a comparative stripling of thirty-one, McCallum Scott, a fellow member of the House of Commons, felt that fate reserved tremendous things for Churchill. Feeling so, he wrote accordingly and was laughed at for his pains. But today the words seem pregnant with true prophecy:

"Churchill is a fatalist. He feels upon himself the hand of destiny. He is the instrument of some great purpose of Nature, only half disclosed as yet, a soul charged with a tremendous voltage of elementary energy. In the miraculous nature of some of his escapes, in the strange sequence of chances and accidents, he seemed to trace a design that was conscious."

EPILOG

Perhaps it is a misnomer. Epilog is usually the closing address to an audience at the end of a play. Happily the drama that is Winston Churchill's life has not come to an end. Here we have, rather, an intermission, and we must perforce wait the entr'acte that will introduce the next scene. The biography of a living man must stop somewhere. This one stops with Churchill and his people facing their gravest crisis. But whether Britain wins or loses, whether Churchill remains the captain of the ship of state or turns responsibility over to someone else, his place in history is secure. He is not just a descendant of the Marlboroughs. By his own right of genius, by his calm yet daring leadership, by his unshaken faith in the soul of his people, he will be looked on by future generations of Britons as one most worthy of a place in that long gallery of their noble ancestors. He will be remembered as the man "out in front" when Britain had to take it.

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